

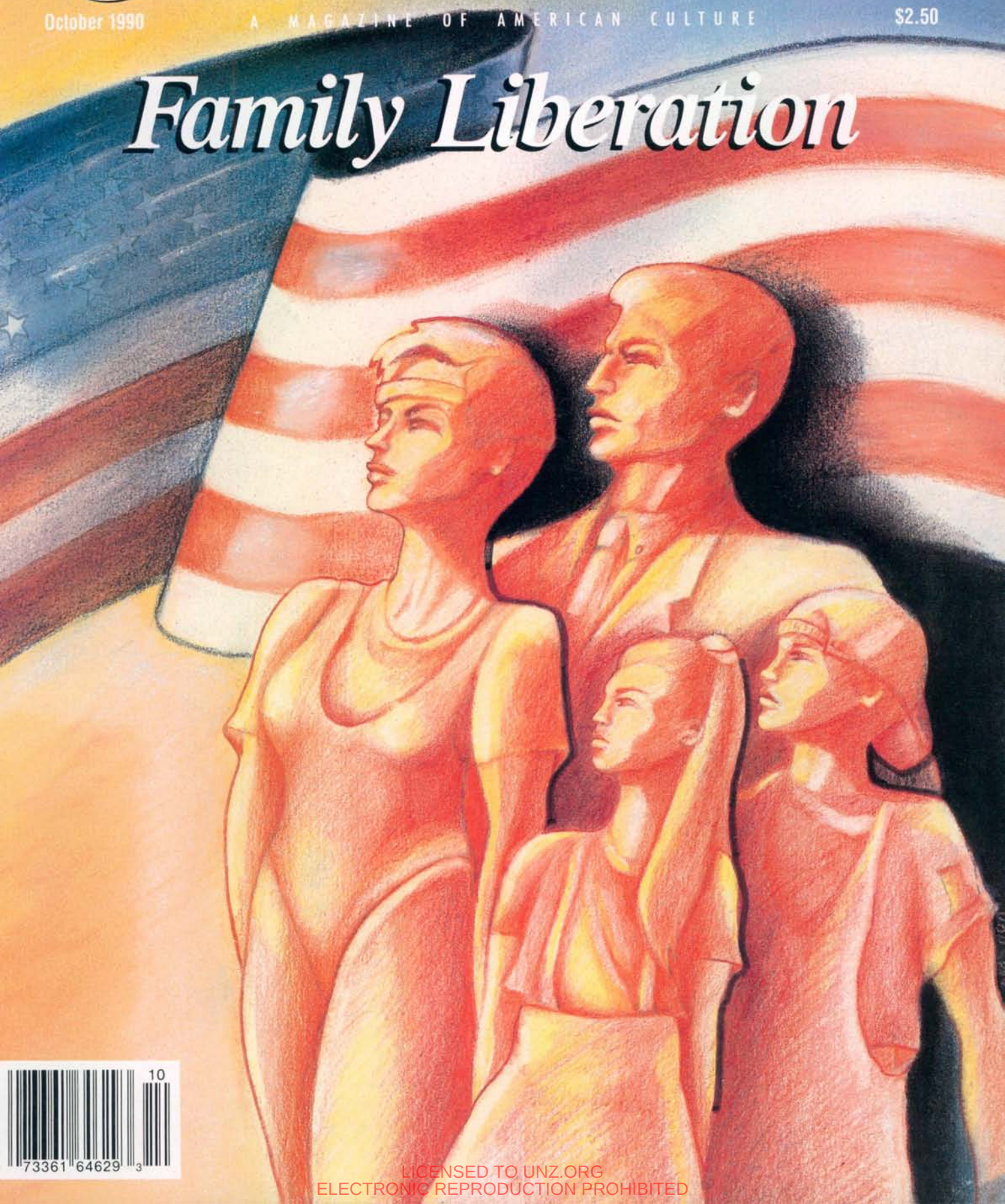
Chronicles

October 1990

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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RED COCAINE

"I was ordered to load up the United States with drugs."

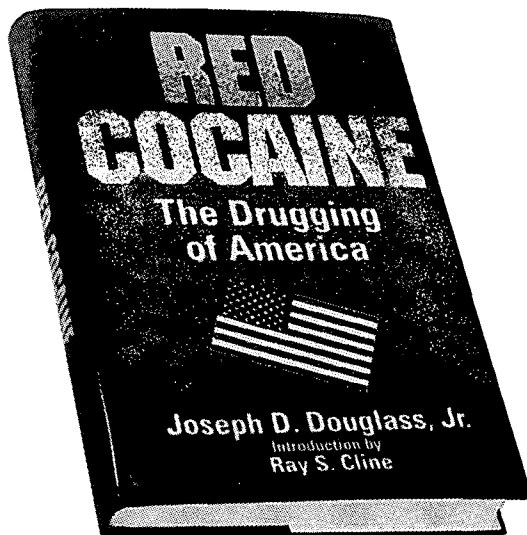
—Mario Estevez Gonzalez, Cuban intelligence agent, 1981

Here's the bone-chilling answer why the "War on Drugs" is getting nowhere:

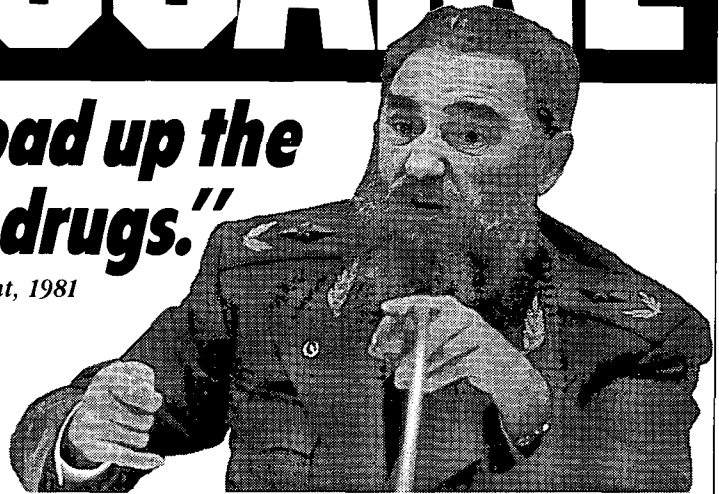
There is a conspiracy of silence to protect the guilty! *Red Cocaine* contains facts that U.S. officials would prefer to ignore. In this frightening, fully documented account, you will learn about Chinese and Soviet drug trafficking operations . . . communist links into terrorist groups and organized crime . . . how our "partners in perestroika" are using drugs to weaken us and enrich themselves.

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You must read *Red Cocaine*.



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—Nikita Khrushchev, 1963

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—Major Juan Rodriguez,
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"Drugs were used as political weapons. The target was the youth of the United States."

—Antonio Farach, high-level
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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Vol. 14, No. 10 October 1990

On 'Natural Technology'

Congratulations on your unique and insightful August environment issue. My only concern is with the article by Frederick Turner. I found his "God is a fetus" natural techno-theology every bit as disturbing as some of your writers have found George Gilder's microchip messianism. I was warned by a good friend once that if intellectual conservatism were to survive into the next century it would have to cross the line from philosophy into theology. He was not optimistic that it would bear much healthy resemblance to Judeo-Christianity. I fear that Mr. Turner is attempting to blaze the treacherous trail.

As an Eastern Orthodox Christian I can agree with some of his criticisms of the Western Christian world view. The Orthodox are much more pre-modern in their perceptions. They have not tended to dig as wide a gulf between themselves and God, and between themselves and nature, as has the West since the Scholastic period. They also have not succumbed to the temptation to scrap the whole Christian world view altogether and attempt to replace it with an axiomatic neo-pagan alternative.

I allow that Mr. Turner is a much more careful thinker than the crystal carriers and channelers infesting our West Coast. But his views do not sound any less utopian. I prefer my theology based on revelation and prayer: on a living God who has made Himself known, rather than on a philosophically malleable concept, regardless of the conservative, liberal, or environmentalist views of those shaping it.

—Stephen T. Early
Bronx, NY

Mr. Turner Replies:

Though it may sound odd to say so, I feel a good deal of sympathy with Stephen Early's objections. My own religious view inclines toward conservatism in the ritual, moral teaching, mysti-

cal meditative techniques, and fundamental storytelling that constitute the core of a religion. Eastern Orthodox Christianity is a glorious example of the continued vitality of religious practice and experience.

However, religion can also have an element of intellectual play, which, like bold and shocking religious art, is often found when religion is expressed within the context of a high civilization. Consider Augustine, Abelard, Luther, Blake. Paul himself was a theological revolutionary, as was John the Evangelist, synthesizing Greek philosophy with Judeo-Christian religious experience. Western Renaissance Christianity, as we see it in Raphael and Milton for instance, richly combines pagan and Christian elements in its Christian humanism. Theology is one of the noblest theaters of the human imagination, and the attempts by church bureaucracies to assert authority over theological speculation only attest to the irrepressibility of this expression of the holy spirit.

Until the suppression of its intellectual institutions by the Turkish Empire, Eastern Christianity rejoiced in a remarkable tradition of philosophical speculation upon the nature of the divine; one of the hidden losses to the world was the failure of Russia to create a great Orthodox university. Perhaps one day there will be an Orthodox Aquinas who will synthesize the best of the current intellectual and scientific learning, as the Western Thomas did, with the religious tradition. We see in such writers as Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, and Pasternak, and, in Greece, Kazantzakis (all of whom were quite capable of saying theologically shocking things), a foretaste of such a synthesis.

Theological speculation is indeed no substitute for the personal experience of the divine. But it need not stand in the way of revelation and prayer either, any more than a lively speculative knowledge of human psychology, evolution, and neurophysiology need stand in the way of one's personal loves, friendships, and commitments with human beings.

WILLIAM J. BRENNAN, Jr., has retired from the Supreme Court. In three decades on the nation's highest court Brennan did more, perhaps, than any other American politician except for Lyndon Johnson to promote the agenda of the liberal left: the antiwhite racism of the "Jim Snow" system, radical feminism, the reduction of the authority of the police to combat crime, the liberation of obscenity, and the confinement of religion to a constitutional ghetto. The means for accomplishing these ends? The massive expansion of federal power in general, and of the power of the federal courts in particular, at the expense of the lawmaking authority of Congress and the state legislatures.

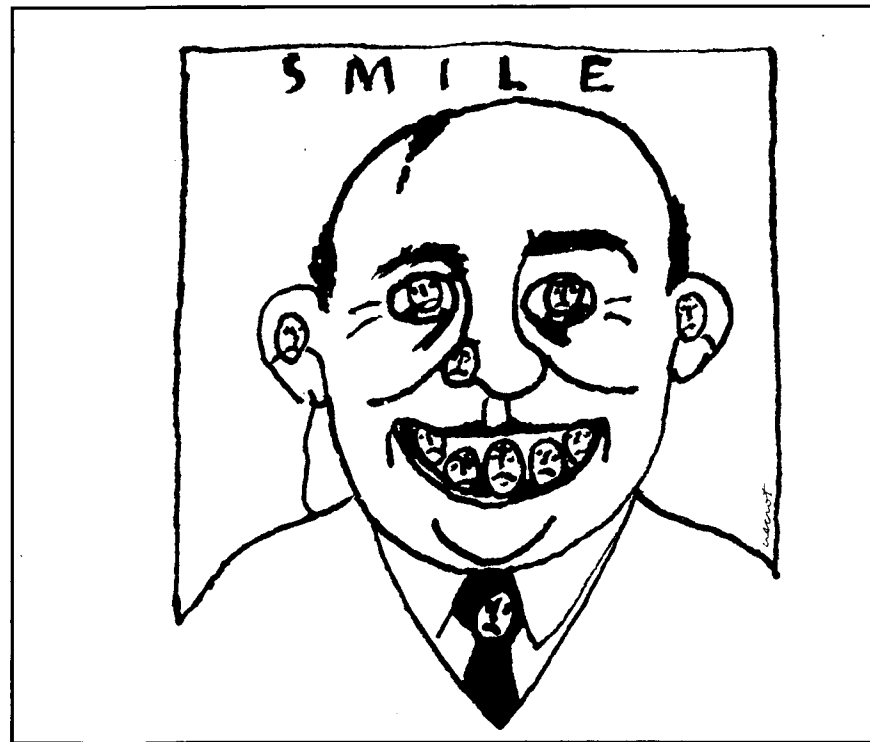
At least Johnson went to the trouble of persuading Congress to pass laws. Brennan, J. and the majorities he assembled in the heyday of the Warren (really the Brennan) Court simply grandfathered their nostrums on the Constitution. "He simply is one of the most important figures of the latter half of the 20th century," Stanford law professor Gerald Gunther gushed to *Newsweek*. Among the legacies of this world-historic liberal statesman: (the exclusionary rule, which forbids the use of evidence gathered during a warrantless search; relaxed rules governing press libels of public figures; and the strict "one-man, one-vote" standard for legislative redistricting. Thanks to these Warren Court decisions orchestrated by Brennan, criminals find it easier to walk free on technicalities, able people who do not want every detail of their lives reported by the press have abandoned government service to plain-vanilla nonentities and bold-faced deviants, and federal judges and government attorneys draw and redraw state and congressional districts with as much concern for local self-determination as the dynasts who partitioned Silesia. Among Brennan's final gifts to the American people are the latest opinion protecting desecrators of the flag, and another recent holding

that the federal government may engage in racial discrimination in awarding broadcast licenses, as long as it discriminates against white people.

"At the core of the process of government erected by the framers—unwieldy, imperfect, wearisome, sometimes maddening—lay a profound vision of justice, and [it is] the duty of the Court to make that vision a reality for the least of men," the presumably wieldy, perfect, and never wearisome Brennan wrote last year. "The genius of the Constitution rests not in any static meaning it might have had in a world that is dead and gone, but in the adaptability of its great principles to cope with current problems." If the explicit provisions of the Constitution conflict with its "vision of justice," its "great principles," as divined by a committee of lawyer-sibyls, then so much the worse for the Constitution. "The fatal constitutional infirmity of capital punishment is that it treats members of the human race as nonhuman, as objects to be toyed with

and discarded," says Brennan. But the Constitution expressly *allows* capital punishment, as its references to capital crimes and "jeopardy of life or limb" in the Fifth Amendment show. If we accept Brennan's theory, then the Constitution is—unconstitutional. This is not broad construction; it is not construction at all; it is oneiromancy.

"Justice delayed—till the Justice resigned," conservatives may observe with pleasant anticipation. Although the liberal triumvirate on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Kennedy, Biden, and Metzenbaum, may try to "bork" David Souter, Bush's nominee to replace Brennan on the Court, Souter has left no "paper trail," having said and written almost nothing controversial or significant between law school and the age of 50. Looking for the most unobjectionable nominee he could find, to prevent the confirmation hearing from turning, like those of Bork and Ginsberg, into an *auto-da-fé*, Bush has found Bartleby the Scrivener. The sailing still may not be smooth;



Andrzej Czeczot

the fact that conservative Republicans are comfortable with the nomination may impel abortion activists and advocates of reverse racism to concentrate their fire, in the absence of inflammable public statements, on any alleged character defects they can find, or invent, in the life of this retiring New England bachelor.

Whatever the fate of the Souter nomination, time is on the side of Republican opponents of leftover Warren Court judicial activists (Thurgood Marshall and Harry Blackmun are both in their 80's and failing). Once the Rehnquist Court has firmly shifted to the right, after this or the next appointment, liberals may be forced to save some dubious "achievements" of Brennan and the Warren Court by recasting endangered old opinions in legislation: new law is but old precedent writ large. The Kennedy-Hawkins quota bill is precisely such an attempt to give liberal precedents disfavored by today's conservative Court a new lease on life in the law. Should the Court's disastrous and unconstitutional ruling in *Roe v. Wade* finally be overturned, liberals will fight in 50 state legislatures to have its provisions reenacted. (Judicial activism by state courts with state constitutional provisions as pretexts is also proving increasingly popular with the left.)

There is a danger that, as liberals are rediscovering democracy in Congress and the states, conservatives will forget it. Already many conservatives, in this age of Republican Presidents, have abandoned their principled opposition to arbitrary executive power. In an era of Republican judges, judicial activism on behalf of conservative and libertarian values might be tempting to the right. Pro-business federal judges in the late 19th century, after all, perfected judicial activism, which was arguably invented by the High Federalist John Marshall; liberals merely dusted it off for their own purposes after World War II.

It would be a bittersweet victory for judges like Brennan who have abused the judicial power to see their opponents adopt their methods, if for different ends. The great issues of society should be decided amid debate and publicity by elected representatives, not by judges and clerks reading briefs, or by executive bureaucrats sending

secret memos from one cement labyrinth to another. In a republic, when a judge of the highest court resigns, no one should care. The great questions in a republic are: what electoral system is the best for our purposes? what do the different parties offer? who will control the legislative leadership and the committees in the legislature? In the oligarchic monarchy that is the post-FDR United States, more attention is paid to the selection of a largely functionless Vice President than to the election of a Senate Majority Leader, and the retirement of an elderly Supreme Court Justice, unlike the resignation in disgrace of a House Speaker, shakes the country to the roots. Perhaps one day America will be a self-governing republic again. If so, William J. Brennan, Jr., may turn out to have served the country by providing an exemplary warning to future generations of what happens when judges, betraying their trust, decide to rewrite the Constitution they claim to enforce.

—Michael Lind

NELSON MANDELA idolized? Am I the only one who didn't do a spastic street dance over his arrival in America? Tell him to take "power" in the wrong African language?

California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown said being with Mandela was like "being in the presence of God." A worshiper along the parade route in New York called Mandela "our savior." A man in Los Angeles said we should lay down "palms in his path."

A few banana peels, maybe.

Mandela is a Red. Worse, he is a Red out of a time machine, who seeks to impose wealth-destroying Marxism on the only country in Africa where everyone has enough to eat.

Mandela also endorses killing and torture by his African National Congress (ANC). When he was arrested in the 1960's, he was carrying ANC explosives to commit sabotage. His *eminence rouge* is the bloodthirsty Lithuanian Communist Joe Slovo. And at his Harlem extravaganza, Mandela sought to honor the aging Puerto Rican Communists who shot up the U.S. Congress and tried to kill President Truman.

Mandela's no hero; he's the political equivalent of 2 Live Crew. Excuse me

if I sit out this rap.

Yes, he spent years in prison—or, rather, in a comfortable house on the prison grounds—although his criminal record justified a death sentence under South African law. Yes, he was ideologically steadfast, just like the Bolsheviks jailed by the tsar. I guess this is admirable in some sense, although I can't think of why right now. And yes, he's dignified and wears thousand-dollar suits. But con men always put up a good front.

Also visiting was Mrs. Winnie Mandela, whose gang of thuggish paramours, the Mandela United Football Club, killed a fourteen-year-old black boy in the basement of her Soweto mansion. They thought he might have talked to the police.

Mrs. Mandela apparently ordered—and enjoyed—the murder. Certainly she has praised the murder of black men and women suspected of talking to the police. She wants them tied up with gasoline-filled automobile tires around their necks, and then set on fire. "With our sticks of matches and our necklaces," she says, "we will liberate this country."

Mandela calls Communist Cuba the "country that stands head and shoulders above the rest" in its "love for human rights and liberty." Indeed, Cuba is his model. South Africa's government is already bloated. If Mandela gets his way, it will look like the Reverend Al Sharpton after a barbecue.

We were supposed to return the clenched-fist Communist salute to Mandela because he's the leader of all South African blacks. But that's another lie. He's chief of the Xhosa tribe, which the ANC represents, along with the smaller tribes traditionally dependent on the Xhosa.

Inkatha, led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, chief of the Zulus, represents the Xhosas' hereditary enemy. If the Xhosas come to power, the industrious Zulus know they will be oppressed, and perhaps even massacred, a pattern all too common in Africa. The fighting in Natal Province today represents the beginning skirmishes in what may be a war of extermination.

Apartheid was a socialist-inspired scheme to cartelize the labor market for white labor unions. Ironically, only real separateness will work now. The

country must be partitioned, with each people — whites, Xhosas, and Zulus — allowed a homeland. A free market is also needed, not only for more prosperity, but to lessen group tensions.

Despite their sins—which pale, if you will pardon the expression, next to the institutionalized theft, witchcraft, and mass murder of the typical African government—the Boers have built a magnificent civilization. And *not* “on the backs of the blacks”; South Africa has by far the highest black standard of living on the continent.

Yet the whole country may go up in flames, as Mandela lights the Molotov cocktail. And there is virtually no American dissent—just media hype designed to Jesse-Jacksonize this country by strengthening black demands for race privilege.

When questioned about his endorsement of Castro, Mandela said “a country’s internal policies” were none of his business. That was an evasion, of course. Mandela loves Castro’s internal policies. But there is a lesson here.

America, wrote John Quincy Adams, “goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy,” lest she be entangled “beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom.”

Mandela, a smarmy demagogue, has assumed the colors and usurped the standard of freedom, but we ought not to be fooled.

Although we should wish the Boers and the other great peoples of South Africa well, their internal policies *are* none of our government’s business. That means no aid to the terrorist ANC, and immediate repeal of the economic sanctions designed to lower black standards of living, and thus foment bloody revolution.

Nelson Mandela wants to impale his country on a Xhosa-Communist spear. We ought not to be sharpening the blade.

—Llewellyn H. Rockwell

A TALE OF TWO prisoners. Nelson Mandela spent many years under arrest. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn spent many years in a slave labor camp, as a fugitive and exile, and as a nonperson.

Mandela resisted a mildly repressive

regime by terrorism. Solzhenitsyn resisted a brutal totalitarian state by heroism and eloquence.

Mandela sought the bestowal of benefits and privileges. Solzhenitsyn sought liberty to work, worship, and think.

Mandela was freed by bringing to bear the power of giant empires and media oligarchies on his own small country. Solzhenitsyn was freed by years of harrowing maneuver against an omnipotent but incompetent state, helped by the attention of handfuls of people in various free countries.

Mandela represents an alien, at bottom incomprehensible culture. Solzhenitsyn represents the deepest and noblest aspirations of our own culture.

Mandela is a very skilled politician. Solzhenitsyn is one of the greatest artists and most eloquent prophets of our age.

In America, Mandela is fawned on by Congress and the President. In America, Solzhenitsyn is avoided by Presidents and other politicians.

What does this tell us about America?

Think about it.

—Clyde Wilson

“DON’T VOTE, It Only Encourages Them” goes the bumpersticker, and it is only one among many signs of voter unrest. Another proposal, newly revived and cropping up in states like Oklahoma and South Dakota, is to reform Congress by limiting congressional terms. Back in 1978 two then-freshman senators, John Danforth and Dennis DeConcini, sponsored legislation that would limit the tenure of representatives in Congress to twelve years, or two terms for senators, six terms for congressmen. Gallup found at the time that 60 percent of the public favored the idea. In 1984 Jack D. Douglas, a sociologist at San Diego, took one step further and suggested that all our representatives be limited to a single term.

The most recent proposal, from Americans to Limit Congressional Terms and with a 70 percent public approval rating, goes back to Danforth-DeConcini—two men who twelve years later are still in office, by the way—and would limit senators and congressmen to twelve years. Such

limits would solve the present problem of incumbents-for-life, and give new energy to elections in which incumbents now enjoy the wolf’s share of the PAC money (so necessary for those expensive campaigns) and a 98 percent chance of being returned to office by their gerrymandered districts.

It’s a very appealing idea. Unfortunately, as I believe the author of the bumpersticker understands better than congressional reformers, without restoring the character of the American politician, true political reform is impossible. The more things may change, the more the Teddy Kennedys and Alan Cranstons of this world will remain the same and remain in power. Just look at term limits in Mexico. Mexican law prevents any man from being president for more than one six-year term, and I hardly need to point out that this limit has done nothing for voter empowerment there. In Mexico’s effectively one-party system, the choice of the next president falls to the president in office (and through him the PRI power structure).

The same is true here in one-party cities like Chicago or states like Kentucky, where the battle for mayor or governor is settled in the primary, with the ruling party’s choice enjoying the advantage. The same is also true for any race in which an incumbent is running. Given the difficulties of ousting an incumbent, our United States are essentially a nationwide patchwork of one-party strongholds. Mexico City has little on us.

Even should the term-limit reforms go through, what’s to prevent our next Tip O’Neill from spending eight years in Congress, twelve years in the Senate, and then as much time as the party will allow him as Massachusetts’ governor or as a federal appointee? In each race after his first he will still have the advantages of incumbency and name-recognition, and despite limited terms he could enjoy a good 25-years plus on the public payroll, spending tax money. (In Mexico, because of the limited terms and the six-year rollover in ruling cliques, politicians at all levels are very dependent on the political bureaucracy for keeping them in jobs when they or their patrons are out of power. Institutionalizing that further here is not what I would call an improvement.)

No: there is a better way to send a

message to Congress that reform is needed. It is for the several states to mandate a "None of the Above" box on every ballot. Let's say your choice is, as here in Illinois in the governor's race, between Neil Hartigan, the Democrat (or presently the "Outs" party candidate, in terms of the governor's mansion), and Jim Edgar, the Republican (or "Ins") candidate. The biggest issue of the campaign is taxes—and both men are pro-tax, arguing only about how much of the two-year "temporary" tax hike of 1989 should be made permanent (nothing is so permanent as temporary change, especially when the change ups your taxes) and at what rate other taxes need to rise.

For those citizens who are, wistfully, of the "read my lips" school of taxpayer satisfaction, it's hard to get too excited about either man. Given that kind of contrariness, next November 6 those Illinoisans are going to stay home, clean their ovens, and join the swelling ranks of apathetic nonvoters.

Give them a "None of the Above" box, however, and they would suddenly have a vote to cast whether or not the Ins and Outs had fielded an appealing candidate.

To work, "None of the Above" needs to be more than a message: it needs some teeth. Should "None of the Above" win the most votes, no candidate could be returned. No mandate, nobody in the seat. My prediction is that in the first year of this reform (should it catch on nationally) nobody would occupy a good third of the House seats and a quarter of the Senate. The joke for years has been that your local congressman is at his best when he's on a junket to Bimini or legislating Grandparents' Day and National Granola Week, and that we are most in trouble when he actually turns his attention to what is supposed to be his job. Here is the voters' chance to have Nobody for Congress, who can do nothing at all. Given the nature of our representatives today, "taxation without representation" is looking very attractive.

I am talking here about a fed-up public going on strike; not leaving the Union, quite, but seceding from the dirty business of government for a term or two (or more—why not?) in an effort to communicate to the national

parties that their men of so-called sterling character look more like nickel silver. Having a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, who have made a nice interparty gentleman's agreement not to use the snuck-on-through congressional pay raise as a campaign issue, is no choice. What every state, county, city, and township needs is the power of the Great Nay.

Just think of it: Nobody in the Senate messing around with the Bill of Rights, Nobody in the V.P.'s office flying by Air Force Two to attend the funeral of some Latin American strongman the voters have never heard of, Nobody in the House moving to send pots of money to a country that only last week was our sworn blood enemy, Nobody teasing his hair or powdering his nose for his appearances on C-SPAN, Nobody, to rewrite Alexander Haig here for a minute, *in charge*. As Jerry Rubin put it—who for all his many faults once understood the crying need today for practical jokes in public life—the power to define the situation is the ultimate power.

—Katherine Dalton

THE UNIV. OF MICHIGAN has not given up. Federal District Court Judge Avern Cohn's August 1989 ruling that Michigan's anti-discrimination and discriminatory harassment policy (inaugurated in April 1988) was unconstitutionally vague and overbroad merely sent administrators back to their drawing boards. After implementing an interim policy last September, University President James Duderstadt assembled three committees (representing students, staff, and faculty, respectively) to advise him on the formulation of a new permanent policy—a policy that, while still not finalized at press time, promises to be little different from the old.

Indeed, by merely throwing out the unconstitutional terms of the original policy, which prohibited "stigmatizing or victimizing" individuals or groups, and replacing them with rules that (as stated in the interim policy) forbid "physical acts or threats or verbal slurs, invectives or epithets . . . made with the purpose of injuring the person to whom the words or actions are directed and that are not made as part of a

discussion or exchange of an idea, ideology or philosophy," the University of Michigan is demonstrating that it has missed the point. Judge Cohn's decision may stop Michigan from banning such remarks as "Women just aren't as good in this field as men" (an example of sanctionable conduct provided in a policy guide that Michigan has since withdrawn). But who's to say that the university's new policy won't still prohibit such acts as neglecting to invite a suspected lesbian to a residence hall floor party or displaying a Confederate flag (other no-no's according to the now-defunct guide)?

Similarly, while Michigan may now hesitate to initiate a formal hearing against someone like the School of Social Work graduate student who openly stated his belief that homosexuality was a disease (as happened in January 1989), it is unlikely that the administration will stop persecuting students like the one who read an allegedly homophobic limerick during class and was subsequently "persuaded" to attend an educational "gay rap" session ("reeducation" is a favorite sanction of policy administrators), write a letter of apology to the *Michigan Daily*, and apologize to his class.

Many students feel the administration is wrong to focus its attention on the guidelines. In fact, it was a Michigan psychology graduate student who (with the Michigan ACLU) filed the suit that ultimately struck down the university's original policy. Proceeding under the pseudonym "John Doe" for fear of adverse publicity, the student claimed that the policy impermissibly chilled his right to freely and openly discuss controversial theories positing biologically-based differences between sexes and races.

Most Michigan students join Doe in harboring no illusions about the administration's proposals. In an October 30, 1989, article in the *Michigan Daily*, each of ten student groups interviewed—from the College Republicans to the Lesbian and Gay Rights Organizing Committee—said the interim policy was not the answer to discrimination. Although four of the groups favor a stronger policy and more student input, both the College Republicans and the College Democrats (among others) realize that any such code is wrong. The president of

the College Democrats, for example, was quoted as saying, "An anti-discrimination policy deals with the problem after it happens; if you want to handle the problem, you have to go to a deeper, tougher level."

But the most fervent opposition to the university's efforts has come from the student government. The Conservative Coalition Party, which controlled the Michigan Student Assembly during the 1989-1990 school year, actively opposed an anti-discrimination policy as a solution to tension on campus. As Alan Charles Kors noted in the *Wall Street Journal* last October, "Free Speech," "Question authority," and "Leave us alone" are now battlecries of the right.

The Conservative Coalition, however, lost last April's student assembly elections to the liberal Action Party, whose stance on the issue is less clear-cut. Newly-elected Michigan Student Assembly President Jennifer Van Valey (an Action member) campaigned on the following statement: "Students are adults—they can handle themselves as adults. The Code will only strengthen the oppressing arm of the administration. . . . We will never sit down and negotiate a Code with the administration. We have nothing to lose by not sitting down. If we sit down to talk, we'll have a code in a second." Yet this same Jennifer Van Valey was co-chair of the student advisory committee that University President Duderstadt established to review the interim guidelines, and two weeks after her campaign promise to oppose the code, Van Valey reportedly stated that "Racist speech is not free speech. . . . [I]t's not our purpose to come up with a policy that will get by a court . . . but to create one that stops harassment."

The student advisory committee has since withheld its recommendations from the administration, informing the regents that it refuses to negotiate with an administration that has, in its opinion, consistently ignored student input. But Van Valey has rejected the idea of a code only insofar as it strengthens the administration at the expense of the students; she believes that a similar policy implemented and administered by students would be "ideal."

Whether or not the student government approves, the University of Michigan's administrators will have

their anti-discrimination policy. But whether or not the policy that the university finally implements will stand up in court, the administration is indeed misguided. For Michigan's policy (like those at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Wisconsin) is more than a radical attack on free speech—it is a bad solution to the university's troubles. Word changes and specifications cannot mend the fatal flaw in the university's policy: regardless of its form, such a policy suppresses discussion of the underlying problem even as it smooths things over on the surface.

Michigan's distinguished demographer Reynolds Farley illustrates this point. Farley discontinued his popular undergraduate course in "race and cultural contact" after a column in the *Michigan Daily* cited examples of so-called racially insensitive statements that Farley had made. Several Michigan faculty members have consequently informed Farley that they, too, are eliminating discussion of race-related issues from their courses, in the fear of being singled out by the "Speech Suppression Movement," as *Fortune's* Daniel Seligman has termed it. The administration's approach to problems of discriminatory harassment is suppressing the very dialogue it must promote if a "rainbow" of races, religions, and creeds are to coexist on campus with a minimum of friction.

As Judge Cohn noted in his decision, Thomas Cooley, a 19th-century justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and a professor at Michigan's Law School, recognized early on that debate is preferable to sanctions where offensive speech is concerned. As Cooley argued in 1868, even if speech "exceed[s] all the proper bounds of moderation, the consolation must be that the evil likely to spring from the violent discussion will probably be less, and its correction by public sentiment more speedy, than if the terrors of the law were brought to bear to prevent the discussion." Unfortunately, it does not appear that the University of Michigan has taken this advice to heart.

—Christine Haynes

O.B. HARDISON, JR., distinguished scholar, critic, and former di-

rector of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, died on August 5. Mr. Hardison had taught at Princeton and the University of North Carolina, and was University Professor of English at Georgetown. He had received scholastic and literary honors from more than twenty universities and societies, including Italy's Cavaliere Ufficiale in 1974 and the Order of the British Empire in 1983. Mr. Hardison's articles in our September issue, "Stratford 1990" and the "Shaw Festival at Niagara," were the first of what were to be a series of pieces on North American drama for *Chronicles*. His insights and erudition will be greatly missed.



We wish also to note the career changes of several friends of *Chronicles*. William R. Hawkins, a regular contributor to the magazine, is running as a Republican for the U.S. Senate seat in Tennessee currently held by Albert Gore. He is backed by the Tennessee Conservative Union. Bill moved to Tennessee from Illinois in the mid-1970's, when the GOP controlled the governor's mansion, both Senate seats, and a majority of the House; it can now claim only three congressmen. Also entering the political arena is John K. Andrews, former president of the Independence Institute. Andrews is running as a Republican for the governorship of Colorado, a conservative state represented by radical politicians. Finally, NYU Dean Herbert London is the Conservative Party's nominee for the governorship of New York. Dean London has been a frequent contributor to our pages, and his campaign will, at the very least, have a wholesome influence on the lazy New York Republicans who routinely sell nominations to the highest bidder. Finally, we wish to announce the publication of a monthly newsletter by historian and biographer Otto Scott, *Compass*. Mr. Scott is a rare bird, a Christian conservative who is also a great raconteur and a man of the world. Covering "books, plays, movies, persons, and events worthy of notice," the first issue appeared last month; subscriptions can be ordered by writing *Compass*, P.O. Box 1769, Murphys, California 95247.

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

Two years after George Bush moved downtown to the White House, the suspicion is beginning to twinkle in the brains of his conservative followers that the President is not one of them after all. What tipped them off to this shattering truth was their leader's nonchalant decision last summer to support a tax increase. But for some months previously they had had ample warnings that the Duke of Kennebunkport was not in fact the Gipperite they had concocted in their heads.

The same week Mr. Bush broke his pledge not to raise taxes, he was wining and dining Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress. Mr. Mandela, sometime fellow of the penal colony on Robben Island, is most noted for a brutally conceived but incompetently executed plot to wage people's war against white South Africans in the 1960's. His consort, the incomparable Winnie, has more recently acquired fame in her own right as an apostle of "necklacing" as well as the object of an official investigation into the torture and murder of a young man in her household. Given the lies and propaganda that have enveloped the Mandela family since Nelson's emancipation last February, it is perhaps understandable that the President had to meet with him. But that he and Mrs. Bush greeted the gruesome twosome so gladly ought to have suggested something about the first family even more strongly than the President's new fiscal policy.

Indeed, the whole substance of the Bush era is suggestive in a way that ought not to please the right. You can tell a good deal about politicians from the social gatherings they attend and the symbols they play with. Last spring Mr. Bush invited to the White House representatives of the "gay community" to observe the presidential signing of what is now known as the "Hate Crimes Act." That too ought to have dropped a hint to social conservatives that the President and his closest advisers don't experience the kind of abdominal heaves that normal people, not to mention real conservatives, invariably feel when they contemplate the subject of sodomy. But though there was some

-muted grumbling about the incident, most right-wingers were silent.

Then, perhaps most substantively, there is the actual legislative record. The first two years of the Bush administration have witnessed an expansion of federal power on a scale probably not seen since the Great Society legislation of 1965. Not only the "Hate Crimes Act" itself, which requires the federal government to keep records of criminal assaults against ethnic and sexual "minorities"—for the ultimate purpose of showing that American society is pathologically hostile to such groups and that major therapeutic programs are needed to extirpate its sickness—but also half a dozen other noisome statutes have sailed through Congress this year with not much more than a whimper of opposition from Mr. Bush.

The Child Care Bill, the Disabilities Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Kennedy-Hawkins Civil Rights Act of 1990 all promise to embark the country on the shoreless seas of utopianism. Unlike most of the social and economic legislation of Lyndon Johnson's era, these laws threaten not merely to cost taxpayers more money, restrict freedom, and fatten the bureaucratic herds, but also to manage, manipulate, and generally reconstruct the cultural norms of American society. As enacted, some of them may seem a bit toothless, but the point is that almost all of them stick their toes in a door that the federal government had not until recently been able to force open. The common assumption of most of them is that there is something profoundly wrong with some of the characteristic norms of American life, that these norms are and ever have been racist, brutalizing, and unfair toward more or less supposedly helpless or victim categories of citizens—the handicapped, the young, the deviant, the nonwhite, and the simple souls who want merely to breathe pure oxygen and drink clear water—and that it is the duty of the state to cure mainstream America of its spiritual and behavioral affliction of being mean to such groups.

Yet what is surprising about their passage through Congress is not only the generally tepid resistance from the Bush White House but also the equally spineless response they received even from congressional conservatives.

Utah's Senator Orrin Hatch actually helped cosponsor (with Senator Ted Kennedy) the Hate Crimes Bill—"I feel very deeply about people's heartaches and problems, and I don't care what their sexual preferences are," Mr. Hatch told the *New York Times*. "That's their business and I'm not going to judge them by my standards or what I think is right."

The Clean Air Act, strenuously opposed by the journalistic myrmidons of the right, nevertheless galloped through the Senate with only six Republican nays. While Senator Jesse Helms, Idaho's Steve Symms and James McClure, Oklahoma's Don Nickles, Wyoming's Malcolm Wallop, and Mr. Hatch's colleague from Utah, Jake Garn, voted against it, other tory stalwarts clambered on board, including Mr. Hatch himself, Texas Senator Phil Gramm, known for his free marketism, and retiring solons William Armstrong of Colorado and Gordon Humphrey of New Hampshire, who can have no reason to fear the orchestrated votes of the earth-shoe lobby.

Of course, most of these gentlemen, including the President, have sought to redeem their conservative souls by strapping themselves to the pole of the flag amendment, thundering for more capital punishment, denouncing drugs, and polishing up periodic declamations on the greatness of America and the sanctity of the family. So far that has succeeded in persuading their constituents to keep them in office, but how much longer it will work is unknown. In any case, such issues are thin substitutes for the meatier dishes that the seemingly immortal left keeps serving up. To be fair to Mr. Bush, why should he call for stronger wine when the guests at his own table sip only Perrier?

In the last few years, much has been written (a bit of it by me) about the intellectual derailment of the American right and the transformation of its mind into a body of notions indistinguishable from New Deal-Great Society liberalism. A foreign policy that dotes on "global democracy" rather than the national interest as the defining object of the State's affairs, a domestic policy that celebrates the charms of the underclass and ponders how to improve its condition even

through government redistribution, and a cultural style that twitters at the feet of the cheap idol of "pluralism" in order to avoid confronting the programmatic challenges to American civilization are now the content of what some are still pleased to call "conservatism." The metamorphosis has occurred under a variety of labels—"neoconservatism," "cultural conservatism," "opportunity society Republicanism," "Big Government conservatism," the "New Paradigm," etc.—but upon scrutiny, all turn out to be plain old vanilla liberalism.

Although the metamorphosis has largely been intellectual and literary, its chickens now have finally found their political roost. Sooner or later, the intellectual disintegration of the right was certain to trickle down from the lofty corridors of think tanks and well-endowed chairs (most of which curiously seem to be named after the same man) to the plain little people who hold public office. Such gentlemen are never noted for their grasp of intellectual subtleties, and when their aides, speechwriters, campaign advisers, and other hired guns present them with books, articles, and lectures spawned by the eggheads of the right, they tend to swoon with the thought of how intelligent they must really be. It is always a mistake for sitting politicians to read and think very much, and usually there is little danger in it. But at least since the time of John F. Kennedy, public men have been expected to sport not only beehive mops of dry-blown hair but also "new ideas." Of course, the left knows perfectly well that the "new ideas" it boasts are merely the same stale premises of tyranny it has always harbored. Only the right actually falls for the slogan and earnestly tries to catch up with its rivals by emulating them.

The rout of the right in the last couple of years in Congress is the logical extension of the new ideas its officeholders have swallowed, but that won't preserve us, in the next two years, from having to endure from these same statesmen every known species of threat, cajolement, pledge, and hucksterism known to democratic politics and the conservative repertoire. There will be (and already is) much moaning about having to run for office under the burden of the President's

broken promise. There will be fretful prophecies of the price—political and economic—the President will have to pay for raising taxes. There will be mutterings about "not supporting George Bush anymore" and rumblings about founding a "third party"—which, should it ever come to pass, would merely be the rank-and-file of the Republican Party under a different label and without most of its nationally known leaders.

But in the end, Mr. Bush will sur-

vive, even as President Nixon survived similar disgruntlement in 1972 when he recognized Communist China and returned from Moscow with the SALT I agreement. The President may or may not survive a challenge from the Democrats in 1992, but one thing he doesn't have to worry about is anything serious from a conservative "movement" that ceased being meaningfully conservative, or a movement, or serious, some time ago.



LIBERAL ARTS



BEARD BANNING IS RACIST, OF COURSE

A July civil rights ruling in Maryland has called into question the legality of on-the-job grooming rules that require men to be clean-shaven. Dermatologists claim that nearly 90 percent of black men are afflicted in varying degrees with a skin condition called PFB, pseudofolliculitis barbae, which makes shaving painful. The banning of beards, therefore, is a racially discriminatory act.

The Maryland case involved one Donald Boyd, who was forced to resign from the University of Maryland police force in Baltimore after he refused to shave his beard. Mr. Boyd said he developed PFB in the Army in 1963, when he was forced to shave regularly for the first time. The problem continued after he was hired as a police officer by the university; co-workers reportedly noticed that he had developed red blotches and infected bumps on his face. He then gave up shaving and grew a quarter-inch beard. His supervisor told him to go on sick leave until the condition was cleared up. Upon exhausting his medical leave, Mr. Boyd was reportedly forced to resign because he refused to shave. "Consciously or unconsciously," he said, "the grooming policy amounts to racism." As of last July, a state hearing examiner had ordered the university to reinstate him with back pay.

This ruling is expected to reverberate throughout the country, affecting in particular municipal police forces. Maryland's Human Relations Commission, in fact, wasted no time in bringing a complaint against Domino's Pizza Corporation, asserting that the company's "no-beard" policy constitutes religious discrimination against a Sikh man named Prabhjot Kohli, whose religion dictates that he wear a beard. Kohli was turned down for a job as manager of a Domino's store in December 1987, when he refused to shave. The Human Relations Commission has asked Domino's to pay Kohli for two years of "lost earnings" and to hire him as a Domino's manager.



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Facts of Life

by Thomas Fleming

*"Birth, copulation, and death.
That's all the facts,
when you come to brass tacks."*

Eliot's three facts of natural life have always been circumscribed with such custom and ceremony as to become social and cultural facts. Birth, copulation, and death may be virtually the same everywhere, when you come to brass tacks, but being born, getting married, and dying are experiences that vary from culture to culture and more resemble forms of art than facts of life. There are some societies in which expectant fathers experience the pangs of birth and many more in which men regularly name their day of death.

The facts of life are everywhere regulated by custom and law, but the regulatory agency is typically the force of precedent and the pressure of shame rather than the policeman's club or the judge's gavel. Human societies have always taken an interest in marriage, but the paraphernalia of licenses and permits are an outgrowth of the church's moral authority, transmogrified by state bureaucracy. The medieval church specified within what degrees of kinship who could marry whom and gave or denied last rites and Christian burial. In the later Middle Ages the church went so far as to sanctify marriages that had been entered into without the consent of the parents of both parties. While at first sight this benevolent indulgence seems to extend the sphere of personal autonomy and individual liberty, the real effect was to strengthen the hand of the ecclesiastical hierarchy at the expense of families.

One of Martin Luther's first orders of business was to reestablish the family as the most honorable and privileged social institution. Luther not only compelled his clergy to undergo the rigors of marriage; he also attempted—without complete success—to restore the parental veto on their

children's marriages. But where the church was relaxing its power, secular authority was already picking up the slack, and although it is difficult not to agree with Luther's attack on the newly acquired privileges of the church, one of the long-term effects of the Reformation was to transfer social authority from clergymen to administrators.

In a unified Christian society, the moral and social authority of the church makes a great deal of sense, even when—as in the years preceding the Reformation—it is most subject to abuse. But in a secular and pluralist society of the sort imagined by American propagandists, such moral regulation becomes a powerful weapon of state despotism. The state's moral authority is all the more dangerous, because it is the most wholesome and religious elements that demand laws on divorce, abortion, and euthanasia. At the same time as churches are fighting off the government's concerted attack on religious freedom, religious people are campaigning for constitutional amendments on school prayer and the "right to life."

The ethical and political confusion surrounding these issues is nowhere more evident than in recent Supreme Court rulings on abortion and euthanasia. Upholding parental consent for abortion in Minnesota and Ohio, while at the same time upholding Missouri's refusal to allow a young woman to die, might seem to reflect a consistent states' rights outlook, but the Rehnquist court—any more than the Burger court or the Warren court—is not a supporter of states' rights except in cases where a decision strengthens the hand either of the Court itself or of government in general.

In both cases the best thing the Court could do is take

itself out of the picture by declaring itself—and its predecessors—incompetent to approve or condemn social regulations that are within the purview of state governments. At times Justice Scalia seems to be alone in understanding that the Court is limited in the good it can seek to accomplish. In his concurrent opinion on the parental consent decision, Scalia reviewed the confusing course of judicial reasoning on abortion, concluding that “the tools for this job are not to be found in the lawyer’s—and hence not the judge’s” toolbox. I continue to dissent from this enterprise of devising an Abortion Code, and from the illusion that we have authority to do so.”

Justice Scalia’s scruples may have more to do with his theology than with judicial restraint, but it is a good sign that he also insisted in the Cruzan “right to die” case that “the Federal Courts have no business in this field.” We can only hope that his skepticism will spread to the other “conservatives” on the Court. The left has no monopoly on judicial activism (Chief Justice Rehnquist has been almost as zealous in the service of government as Earl Warren), and while Rehnquist’s political views are vastly more wholesome than his two predecessors, he ought to recollect, from time to time, that he is not a legislative or executive official. If the justices wish to govern Missouri or Minnesota, let them resign their positions and repair to the hinterland where they can run for office with all the tricks of honest chicanery for which American politics is celebrated.

The debate over abortion and euthanasia has been cast in the predictable form of conflicting rights: the right to die vs. the right to life in Missouri, where the parents of Nancy Cruzan—lying hopelessly in a coma—have decided to put an end to the medical profession’s arrogation of the power of life and death; and in the Minnesota and Ohio parental consent cases, a woman’s right to an abortion vs. the parents’ rights vs. the rights of the unborn. However, neither ruling took much account of the family per se as a basic social institution. For the Court, it is individuals that matter, and when a person is incapable of making rational decisions (because of age or condition), responsibility may be delegated to family members or friends. The contested point in Missouri was not over who had the power—state or family—to make the decision to cut off life support, but over how explicitly Miss Cruzan had stated her wishes. (Even where patients have made their intentions plain, they may still be kept alive artificially, as in the Edward Winter case commented on in the *July Chronicles*.) In the parental consent decisions a great deal of time has been wasted—as Justice Scalia pointed out—in discussing whether it was possible or preferable, where a pregnant minor’s parents were divorced, to require two-parent as opposed to one-parent notification.

But while the family is a legal institution, it cannot be made or unmade by law. That responsibility lies in the hands of nature, which compels us to mate and rear children, and of God, who has given us clear instructions in Scripture and in the teachings of the church. A friend, no matter how dear, is not the same thing as a parent, and while it might be useful to permit us in some cases to delegate a life-and-death decision to some trusted friend, the presumptive human authority must always reside in the family, the ultimate basis both for human society and for government.

What is at stake in both these cases is really family autonomy. Who better than family can decide on a question like abortion or the removal of life support? Judges? Social workers? Policemen? In fact, neither the Minnesota nor Ohio laws go far enough: neither actually gives families an absolute veto power over abortions; they only require parental notification, and even then, it is possible to get around even this minimal requirement, if a girl can show some plausible reason why her parents should not be informed.

The main question facing the Court is not the sanctity of life or individual rights but the liberty of the family to make its own decisions without interference. A similar point lies at the heart of the cases of parents who, out of religious scruples, refuse to seek professional medical attention for their sick children. No one would want to countenance child neglect, but no one in his right mind would want to turn over life-and-death decisions to the American Medical Association. What are the odds, today, of surviving to 70 for people who don’t go to doctors as opposed to people who do? In individual cases, of course, physicians save countless lives, but if one can believe the physicians themselves, a large proportion of life-threatening operations performed are absolutely unnecessary. We do know that when doctors and hospitals go on strike, the death rate falls.

Still, what if it could be established that the child mortality rate is much higher among religious groups that eschew medical treatment? One study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (September 22-29, 1989) compared Christian Science college graduates with a control group. The authors concluded that Christian Scientists do, indeed, have a lower life expectancy and, what is worse, die from cancer at a rate that is twice the national average. Still, a man’s health is his own business. As a general principle, however, it would be preferable to attack the problem directly by discouraging the spread of religions that sacrifice children. The Romans outlawed the Druids, because they practiced human sacrifice, and it is time for these United States to do something about Santeria. If—and I do say if—a plausible case can be made to include Christian Science or the Jehovah’s Witnesses, then it is better to outlaw a religious sect than to allow the state to intrude further into the family.

Family autonomy is the only solid foundation for a free society, and the status of the family as a primary social institution was an established fact both of ancient law and of the major philosophical systems of antiquity and the Middle Ages. In America, these ancient views of the family, already embedded in the Common Law, took on new life as this continent was settled by small household groups that constituted virtually independent republics.

The social history of America, as it has been written by professional historians, has concentrated far too much on the East, particularly the Northeast. In fact it has been the unsettled and half-settled areas of the frontier, the backcountry, and the backwaters of Middle America that have determined the national character. And this story—like so much social history—has been better told in fiction and memoirs than in monographs and dissertations. To get a flavor of what life was like for the free American families, you can turn to writers like Ole Rølvaag and Willa Cather,

or to the works of a redoubtable mother-daughter team of Laura Ingalls Wilder and Rose Wilder Lane.

Free Land is the title of a Rose Wilder Lane novel dedicated to the American farmers who pulled up stakes and took advantage of the western lands made available under Homestead legislation. The title is richly suggestive. There was nothing “free” about land that men and women earned by the sweat of their brow, and Mrs. Lane drew upon the memory of her father, Almanzo Wilder, for this portrayal of grinding poverty, blistering drought, and blizzards that could be more devastating to human life than a tornado or major hurricane. But in a deeper sense, these prairie lands were free, because the families who settled them were free. No one knew this better than Laura’s daughter Rose, who moved from the farm to the big city and who in her career as journalist went from being a fashionable leftist to a life of protest as an anti-government, anti-war, anti-tax anarcho-libertarian.

Reading the firsthand accounts of the families who settled the frontier, “the land vaguely realizing westward,” I am always struck not so much by the hardship as by the resilience of the settlers. Years ago Robert Hine (in *Community on the Frontier*) showed with what determination the women, when there were women, set about establishing the norms of family life under the most adverse conditions. Men were the leaders and organizers, but women were indispensable both for their labors and because they conveyed, in their very persons, the lares and penates of domestic life and human society. Sarah Royce observed that the rough miners of California were aware of how deeply they had sunk into barbarism: “Even in their intercourse with each other, they often alluded to this feeling, and in the presence of women, then so unusual, most of them showed it in a very marked manner.”

In heading west into a country without law, many of the settlers apparently were afraid of encountering the anarchy and violence that has been portrayed in fiction, film, and television in our own century. John Mack Faragher (*Women and Men on the Overland Trail*) quotes one woman pioneer’s realization that “when we set foot on the right bank of the Missouri River we were outside the pale of civil law.” But, as Faragher points out, the threat of anarchy rarely materialized. Settlers quickly organized themselves either into wagon trains or, even more frequently, into parties of kinfolk. Fights there were, as there always are when people—many of them previously strangers—are put under severe physical and moral strain, but order did not break down in the absence of official constraints. Far from it.

Then, as now, it is not police and courts that keep people from killing and robbing each other. Wherever an extensive police force is required, it is a sign of a social dissolution so hopeless that no penal system can prevail against it. In my neighborhood, you hardly need police, and where they are needed—in the projects of Washington, New York, and Chicago—the police are virtually powerless.

Read through the *Little House* books, and you will find few mentions of law or police. Even where the institutions of law and order existed in rural and frontier America, they were never the primary mechanisms of social control. Families minded their own business, quite literally, and when they had cause to quarrel with a neighbor, it was rarely

the cause of a suit or action. What government there was had no authority to interfere within households, where a father’s word was law. A man had not only legal but economic control over his wife and children down to the middle of the century, and even when the various Married Women’s Acts were passed, giving wives the right to make contracts and wills, the man of the family remained in fact the lord and master in his own home.

Feminists and men not worthy of the name like to speak of “the patriarchy” as an oppressive tyranny from which we are only just beginning to liberate ourselves. In one sense they are right. Despite the vicissitudes that male dominance has undergone in history—relatively low in imperial Rome and high in England under the Tudors and Stuarts—adult males have been in control since the days of Adam or, if you prefer, of *Homo erectus*. Feminists are also probably right in their contention that Western civilization, when compared with many savage and barbarous cultures, has been remarkably patriarchal. I say remarkably rather than uniquely, because all great civilizations have shared this quality.

While it is dangerous to compare the experiences of different peoples at different stages of their development, a brief glance at Western man’s record as patriarch is suggestive. Homer’s *Odyssey* is, to a great extent, fiction, but it does portray a society in which women like Penelope and Arete (Queen of the Phaeacians) exercise enormous influence, while in Periclean Athens women were rigidly supervised and segregated from most male activities. Contrast democratic Athens with royal and oligarchic Sparta, where the women were, proverbially, indulged to the point of license. The Republican Rome that defeated the child-murdering Carthaginians allowed household heads full enjoyment of the *patria potestas*, the power of life and death over their dependents, but the Roman law of Diocletian’s day—when most citizens had become wards of the imperial state—generously protected the rights of women and children. In our own history, that is in the history of Britain and America, it is a cliché that patriarchal power was strengthened in the 17th century and remained strong down into the Victorian era.

For those of us who think that history has lessons to teach, it would seem that patriarchal power tends to be stronger in societies that emphasize personal liberty and self-government, weaker under regimes, like Sparta and later Rome, in which the state exercises great power over private life. This should not be surprising, since the only alternative to paternal supremacy is government supremacy. A man’s children, even when they are grown, could never by themselves represent a threat to his power, and the same holds true for his wife, whose “rights” have almost always been protected primarily by her male relatives—fathers, brothers, and husbands.

Today, women’s rights are the subject of legislation and judicial fiats. Whenever you hear the word “rights,” it is time to release the safety on your Browning, because you know that some politician somewhere is planning to make himself richer and more powerful at your expense. This is not a new insight. Aristotle, in his discussion of tyranny, observed that it was the habit of tyrants to champion the cause of women and social inferiors. This is not a question

of power going to the head. What all irresponsible authority fears is honest merit, the proud aristocrat, the uncompromising intellectual, the statesman who cannot be bought. Such men are dangerous and must either be eliminated in purges or else be forced to endure the constant humiliation of seeing their dependents liberated and set above them.

Among the many ironies of intellectual history is the association of the term "patriarchy" with political absolutism. This is largely due to the influence of Sir Robert Filmer, the author of *Patriarca*, a work that defended the royal prerogatives of Charles I against the rights of Parliament or people or even law. While much of Filmer's reasoning is inextricably bound to the circumstances and quarrels of his own time, there is a core of insight that retains its vitality, now that the fruit of monarchy is withered and rotted. What Filmer realized—and so few political thinkers since have grasped—is that the authority of government can never be based on consent alone, because consent always comes down to voting majorities which will assume the right to do exactly as they please with minorities.

Such assumption of power, whether it comes from a despot or a democracy, can never be legitimate, and even though Filmer went to extreme lengths in defending the royal prerogative, Charles I went to his death insisting that, as a defender of his own and the people's traditional liberties, he was "a martyr of the people." Comparing Charles' record of petty oppressions with the vast tyranny of Cromwell, it is hard to escape the conclusion that he was telling the truth. This is not to say that monarchy is a better form of government than a republic or a democracy, because political systems cannot be compared in the abstract. Most people were freer, in their private life at least, in monarchical England than they were in the oligarchic republic of Venice, and in many ways, our ancestors who fought to liberate themselves from the yoke of a half-mad king and a venal Parliament were already freer than we their descendants will ever be.

Americans did not achieve their liberties either by fighting a revolution or by making a constitution. They wrested it from an unfamiliar land and under strange skies, minding their own affairs in their own households, cooperating freely with their neighbors, and settling their own problems with little recourse to soldiery, constabulary, or judiciary. The kinfolk of Sir Robert Filmer who settled in Virginia did not transmit Sir Robert's regard for royal authority; however, they did bring with them that country gentleman's independence and self-reliance, and it is no irony that the great patriarchalist's blood flowed in the veins of many Virginians who led the American fight for independence.

The democratic habits of self-reliance and cooperation (but not communalism) were handed down from one generation of farmers and independent tradesmen to another. They also infected the Germans, Scandinavians, and other settlers of the frontier. I sometimes wonder if the real conflict in America is not so much between old stock and new stock as between the people whose families braved the wilderness and busted the sod and those whose ancestors clung to the safe apron-fringe of the continent and never sank roots into the soil of America. I know that I have more

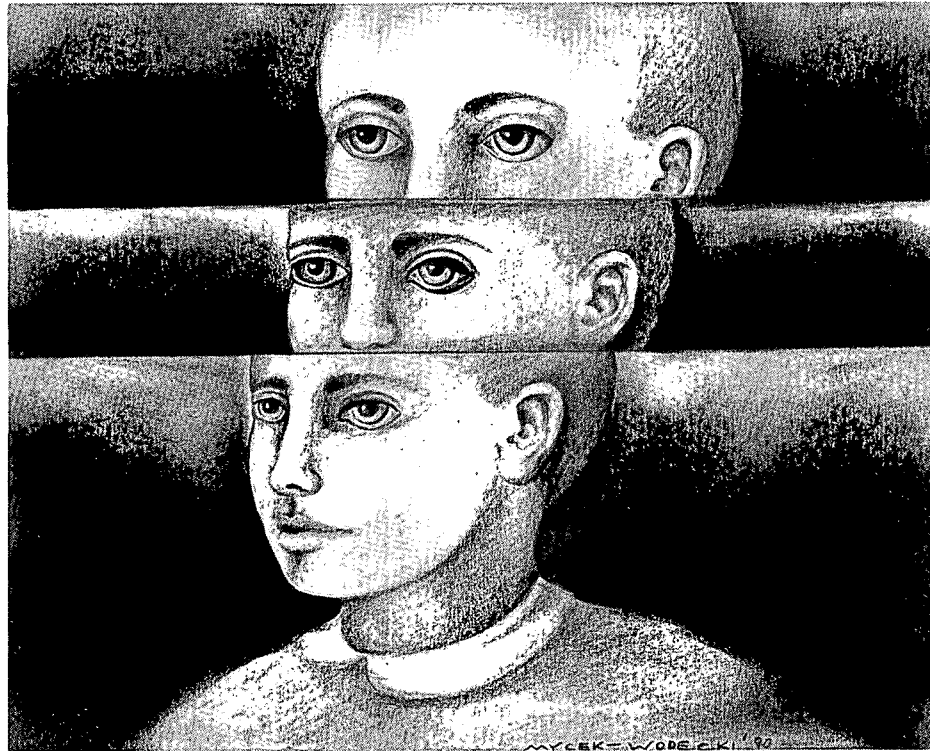
in common with a Finlander working a dairy farm near Lake Superior than I do with an English-born banker in New York. Individuals are forgetful, but families have memories. What else explains the peculiarly American philosophy of Josiah Royce, with its concern both for individualism and for local community and provincialism? I was never able to appreciate Royce until I looked into his mother Sarah's account of her experiences as a pioneer.

If you really want to understand America as it once was and might, impossibly, be again, go visit, sometime, the little towns of Missouri and Wisconsin. Get off the interstate and drive, as we did last summer, to De Smet, South Dakota, a town named in honor of the heroic Belgian Jesuit who missionized the Plains Indians. There you will find the simple relics of the Ingalls family, whose period of residence there Laura in later years referred to as "these happy golden years." Consider the lives of these decent plain folk who spent their life in labor without asking or expecting anything from government, and you will begin to understand why Rose Wilder turned to anarchism as the only sensible response to the mess we have allowed our masters to make of this country. 

Mussels

by William M. Galbraith

There were those times the sea sighed down.
The rocks were thickly blossomed and shone
still wet with the clones of clustered shells
rooted with hairy feet and full of smells
of deep-krilled brine and brined flesh.
The sea-salt stir . . . There was the thresh,
the surge, the scurry, the mouths, the frilled sperm
that flustered out, a wash of amazing worm—
a spew of toothy children, voyagers
that early once, that ride the tide's course
as if intention caught a minnow's tail
and rode it home, part of the vast exhale
of that astonishing womb. The serried ranks
stood shoulder tight along the ocean's banks.
You'd think so many could be heard, the click
of opening and closing, the soft suck
of their breathing; or could they cry the knife
that prized them up, a pearl-crust life,
to bait another, dangled on the green wave . . .
The singleness of death . . . Enormousness can save
the hurt of that torn valve and the yawn
of fishes' mouths eat small of such a spawn.



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Restoring Family Autonomy in Education

by Edwin G. West

Mark Twain once confided that he received public schooling as a child but never let it interfere with his education. Millions today are not so fortunate; for their education is being interfered with. The full extent of the problem came to light in 1983 in four major national studies. (The four reports were as follows: *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, by the National Commission on Excellence in Education; *Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools*, by the National Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Education Commission of the States; the New York-based Twentieth Century Fund's study, chaired by Robert Wood, a former U.S. secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and a report directed by Theodore R.Sizer, former Harvard University Education School dean and headmaster of Andover Academy.) The most scathing condemnation was delivered by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Concluding that the public schools were in a serious state of decline and were

indeed a threat to the nation's social, political, and economic well-being, the commission revealed, among other things, that about 13 percent of all seventeen-year-olds and 40 percent of minority youth were functionally illiterate.

The 1983 studies caused a flurry of activity within the educational establishment, and several official promises of reform were promptly announced. Subsequently, however, not much has improved. In his 1988 *Report to the President and the American People* entitled "American Education: Making It Work," Secretary of Education William Bennett concluded that "gains in student learning are slight and the average level of student skill and knowledge remains unacceptably low." In its 1985 report, *The Condition of Education*, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) also concedes that not much improvement has been made:

The school systems throughout the nation face the formidable challenges of improving students' performance and coping with the changing social and economic environment. Current student performance may be insufficient to meet the

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demands that will be placed on them as they move to higher levels of schooling or into the work place. Performance levels are changing very slowly despite increases in graduation requirements, relatively stable enrollments, substantial increases in teacher salaries, and the continued willingness of the public to support its schools . . . Recent educational reforms have been instituted in response to some of these problems. The impact of these changes does not yet appear in national data.

The same source admits that the academic performance record of students, as measured by standardized tests, shows that they still cannot perform many ordinary tasks. Only a small portion of seventeen-year-olds perform at the highest proficiency levels. With respect to reading, few students even in the 11th grade can defend their judgments and interpretations about what they read. Similar deficiencies show up in mathematics and science, where performance has been low for more than ten years and has improved very little. In 1986, mathematics proficiency of seventeen-year-olds was no higher than in 1973. Tests in the same year showed that 49 percent of seventeen-year-old students were unable to perform moderately complex procedures.

The first international study of educational progress published its initial results in 1989. Thirteen-year-olds from the United States and five other countries (Canada, Ireland, Korea, the United Kingdom, and Spain) were assessed in a standardized fashion in mathematics proficiency. Students in the United States were in the lowest scoring group. (International Assessment of Educational Progress, *A World of Differences, an International Assessment of Mathematics and Science*.)

It is interesting to recall that in 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education wanted computer science instruction to be required of all high-school students as part of its recommended "Five New Basics." In a 1985-86 assessment of computer competence, students in each of grades 3, 7, and 11 generally averaged less than 50 percent correct on the test items.

The most quoted general measure of educational ability is the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). After two decades of steady decline in SAT results there was some slight recovery in 1982, but scores have remained stable since 1985. In 1988 average scores were significantly lower than they were in 1963.

The absence of striking productivity improvements in public schooling has not prevented significant rises in teacher rewards. The average annual salary of teachers in elementary and secondary schools increased between 1983 and 1988 by 35.5 percent in current dollars and 12.14 percent in constant dollars. Another benefit that appears to have been enjoyed by teachers in most years since 1959 is a steady reduction in the pupil/teacher ratio. In 1959-60 this ratio was 26:1. By 1987-88 it had fallen to 17.6:1.

During the heated discussion over the published criticisms of 1983, one predictable suggestion came from the educational establishment: a major part of the problem, it insisted, derived from underfunding. Of all the pieces of advice offered, this seems subsequently to have been the most diligently adopted. Expenditures per pupil in current

dollars grew by 43 percent from \$2,955 in 1983 to \$4,211 in 1988. (In constant dollars the increase has been approximately 22 percent.)

The haste to increase expenditures per student is in contrast to the recent findings of research on schooling factors that influence student performance. After surveying 65 studies on the influence of expenditures per pupil, Professor Eric A. Hanushek of the University of Rochester reported in the *Journal of Economic Literature* that 49 showed no statistical significance and that of the 16 that showed significance, 3 indicated a negative relationship. Of 112 studies on the influence of changing teacher/pupil ratios only 23 were statistically significant, 9 in the positive direction and 14 in the negative direction.

Average taxpayers and parents can surely be excused for feeling considerable frustration and confusion in the face of the failure of the public school reform movement and the apparent lack of knowledge and leadership concerning where to go next. Observers may be excused also for coming to the conclusion that the public school lobby's contribution to the debate is increasingly self-defensive. Its attempt to perpetuate an argued *potential* or an endless dream of the "one best system" (as distinct from reality) is increasingly suspect. The same skeptical observers believe that it is time to awaken from "false consciousness" and to reassess the original arguments for the public system.

A return to first principles immediately raises the issue of paternalism. One must acknowledge straightaway an important distinction between the freedom of adults and the freedom of children. Since children are too young to make long-term educational decisions for themselves, granting freedom to them is not feasible. Here we have a case of *inevitable* paternalism, and the question is which is the best kind to invoke: paternalism within the family or paternalism by the state? The choice between the two is not as easy as it looks at first sight. The situation has been well expressed by F.A. Hayek in *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960):

Though it is generally in the best interests of children that their bodily and mental welfare be left in the care of their parents or guardians, this does not mean that parents should have unrestricted liberty to treat their children as they like. The other members of the community have a genuine stake in the welfare of the children. The case for requiring parents or guardians to provide for those under their care a certain minimum of education is clearly very strong.

John Stuart Mill's view is equally pertinent. The following is a quotation from his *Principles of Political Economy* (1848):

In this case [education] the foundation of the *laissez-faire* principal breaks down entirely. The person most interested is not the best judge of the matter, nor a competent judge at all. Insane persons are everywhere regarded as proper objects of the care of the state. In the case of children and young persons, it is common to say, that though they cannot judge for themselves, they have their parents

or other relatives to judge for them. But this removes the question into a different category; making it no longer a question whether the government should interfere with individuals in the direction of their conduct and interests, but whether it should leave absolutely in their power the conduct and interests of somebody else.

Mill, I believe, was mistaken in assuming that the common argument that parents and relatives can judge for their children was a claim for *absolute* control. What most people appear to have in mind is a *fiduciary* power to be removed in cases where abuse can be shown. Education legislation can in fact be viewed as part of a comprehensive system of child abuse laws. Besides education, this system includes welfare payments to families with dependent children, stringent rules about divorce when young children are involved, and minimum ages of marriage. Child abuse laws, of course, are also designed to monitor, control, and discipline delinquent parents who give their children inadequate food, clothing, and shelter.

In reflecting on this protective legal framework for children, an interesting paradox soon emerges: only in the case of education does the state go so far as to provide the service free of charge to all parents, rich or poor, delinquent or not. Indeed, if child abuse laws were symmetric we would see laws for the compulsory and free feeding and clothing of children. I shall argue that while the usual child abuse legislation related to the feeding and clothing of children is consistent with freedom, including the freedom of the children being protected, legislated state education in its present form places freedom in jeopardy. The main reason, it will be argued, centers on the removal of the price mechanism.

To return to John Stuart Mill's point that in the case of education the *laissez-faire* principal breaks down because 1) children cannot choose for themselves wisely and 2) they are, in any case, without the means to do so. By the same token, the *laissez-faire* principal breaks down also in the case of feeding, clothing, and sheltering children, because here too there are the same impediments to responsible choice by dependent minors. Yet while the *laissez-faire* principal, in John Stuart Mill's sense, breaks down in *all* these instances, it is interesting that states normally allow families to purchase food and clothing at positive prices and from stores that are in competition with each other in *laissez-faire* retail markets. Where some families are regarded as too poor to make adequate purchases the policy response has been to buttress their incomes in some way. It appears to be recognized, in other words, that the ability in a free market to change one's food store when it threatens to become, or has become, inefficient is an effective instrument whereby parents can protect their children from inferior goods and services in a prompt and effective manner. If this is so, then one should expect that the same arguments for protection would lead, not to a "free" school system where it is normally difficult to change one's "supplier," but in the direction of fee-paying where it is easier to do so. Those families who cannot currently afford to pay the fees can, as Milton Friedman recommends, be supplied with education vouchers covering the tuition levels demanded in a competi-

tive school system.

John Stuart Mill the libertarian seemed to have grasped the spirit of this argument up to a point. As much as he wanted the protection of children, he did not in the end prescribe compulsory state schooling, or even compulsory private schooling, but only compulsory *education*. Mill held that the state should be interested not merely in the number of years of schooling but in the results of education, whatever their sources. Accordingly, he contended that a public examination system was all that was necessary. If a young person failed to achieve a certain standard then extra education would be prescribed at the parents' expense. Another sanction Mill entertained was that of making the right to vote conditional on some minimum degree of education. The distinction between schooling and education was the same as that made later by Mark Twain.

The public examinations Mill had in mind were concerned primarily with the communication of knowledge. But many will insist that this is not the only function of education. There is also a need for the inculcation of values. Yet dependence on state schools to attend to *this* need involves probably the most important danger to freedom. As Hayek observes, "the very magnitude of the power over men's minds that a highly centralized and government-dominated system of education places in the hands of the authorities ought to make one hesitate before accepting it too readily." Hayek's sentiments echo those of Mill, who wrote in *On Liberty*:

A general state education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another: and the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body.

Despite the warnings of Mill and Hayek, modern social scientists persist in what they believe to be the "social purposes" function of education, a function that many of them consider to be the exclusive province of government. Economists like to speak in terms of the "public" (or "external"), as distinct from the "private," benefits of education. An example of the latter is the increased income flowing from the type of education (such as literacy training) that creates "human capital." Such income is private to the family and is accordingly "internalized" by it. Examples of the argued social purposes or "public benefits" of education include 1) the inculcation of common values that are needed to make democracy viable, 2) the desirability of a common educational experience, and 3) equality of access to education.

With regard to the inculcation of common values, not much is said about how to recognize them. And still less is said about why the state should have the right to impose them on all pupils. But even if there was agreement about what values were common, the question would remain whether the public school system is, or could be, efficient in this enterprise. Even those who are sympathetic with the

objective have their doubts about implementation. They complain, for instance, that contemporary public high schools are like “shopping malls,” containing a hodge-podge of course offerings with little central coherence in their total program. And because, in practice, the public schools resist attempts at homogenization, a student in one school district might well receive an entirely different set of “common values” than his counterpart in another school district close by.

With respect to the alleged need to provide a “common experience,” the assumption seems to be that children in each public school are drawn from a fully representative population. Public schools, however, do *not* contain a typical cross-section of people. The main reason is the existence of residential stratification according to income. The mere fact, too, that religious and private education is allowed and exists under the U.S. Constitution precludes the full representation of the population in public schools even in the absence of residential stratification.

Concerning the objectives of equity and equal access, it is arguable indeed that public provision is counterproductive. The system produces heterogeneous qualities of education, with the worst offerings appearing in large-city ghetto schools in which low-income families find themselves trapped. Many of the middle class and the rich obtain a better deal for several reasons. Because public schools want to try and maximize the number of their students, but face a fixed amount of resources to do it, and since wealthy parents are more likely to move their children to private schools if there is a reduction in the quality of public schools, this situation will most likely require making the public schools in wealthy areas of a higher quality. In any case, the superior degree of mobility that middle-class parents enjoy enables them to search out and secure the superior services within the educational system.

For all of these reasons, not everybody will agree with the conclusion of some that education vouchers could bring greater benefits to wealthier families than to low-income families. Milton and Rose Friedman insist on the opposite view, that their voucher system would promote equity just as much as efficiency. Their reasoning appears in the following quotation from their book *Free to Choose* (1980):

Are the supermarkets available to different economic groups anything like so divergent in quality as the schools? Vouchers would improve the quality of the public schooling available to the rich hardly at all; to the middle class, moderately, to the lower-income class, enormously.

A recent Gallup poll indicated that nearly half of those who are now sending their children to public schools would choose private schools if the latter were made tuition-free. Those parents who selected the private schools over the public schools were then asked to explain their choice. The reason offered most often was that private schools have the “highest standard of education.” Better “discipline” came next, followed by “individual attention,” “smaller class size,” “better curriculum,” and “better quality of teachers.”

The concern about discipline is longstanding. In my opening paragraph, I referred to public schools inter-

fering with people’s education. The most conspicuous example of this is the failure of many public schools to maintain order in the classroom. In assessing the incidence of student disruptive behavior in 1987, 19 percent of the public school teachers surveyed by the U.S. Department of Education reported that there was “much more” of it in their school than five years before; another 25 percent indicated that there was “somewhat more” now. Almost one-third of the teachers surveyed stated they had seriously considered leaving teaching because of student misbehavior.

In the context of such a poor record on discipline, the argument that the need for social indoctrination justifies a public school system looks particularly weak. Clearly, if education is being disrupted by unruly behavior there can be no successful instruction in “common values” or anything else. And when disruptive behavior is coupled with violence, theft, and drug abuse, it is legitimate to question the kind of “common values” that are being inculcated.

◆

**Education legislation can be viewed
as part of a comprehensive system
of child abuse laws.**

◆

In a report to the Congress in 1977, the National Institute of Education revealed that about 2.4 million secondary school students (11 percent) had something stolen from them in a typical month. About 1.3 percent of the students reported being attacked in a month. The most arresting finding was that young teenagers in cities ran a greater risk of violence in school than outside of school.

The same report concluded that the single most important difference between safe schools and violent schools was found to be a strong, dedicated principal who served as a role model for both students and teachers and who instituted a firm, fair, and consistent system of discipline. The trouble is that neither the National Institute of Education nor governments appear to be able to guarantee that each public school will have the dedicated type of principal just described. Principals who fall short of these qualities are difficult to dislodge because of the usual terms of union-negotiated contracts of employment. Here indeed is another example of the way in which the structure of the public school system can interfere with children’s education. The NIE report revealed that 4 percent of students stayed home from school because they were afraid, and that around 600,000 secondary students reported they were afraid most of the time. Twenty-two percent of all secondary students reported avoiding some restrooms at school because of fear, and 20 percent said they were afraid of being hurt or bothered at school at least sometimes.

The NIE study found that *academic* competition inside schools reduced the risk of violence. “The data suggests that violent students are more likely to be those that have given up on school, do not care about grades, find the courses irrelevant, and feel nothing they do makes any difference.” This finding is relevant to the public/private debate. In the “progressive” atmosphere of modern school teaching, grad-

ing has often become de-emphasized because of the preference for "cooperation" over competition. In contrast, private schools have, on average, defended the traditional structure of education where competition and grading are essential features.

The NIE also found that larger schools experience more violence and vandalism than smaller ones. Since, on average, private schools in the U.S. have smaller enrollments than public schools, we should find the former less crime-prone. Also, there is a greater chance with a market system of schooling that the issues of disruptive behavior and violence will be resolved through the greater exercise of parental choice of schools. Where competition between schools is reasonably effective, a school that cannot maintain discipline will lose its students to one that can, and go bankrupt if it can't improve.

In a system in which it is difficult to dislodge ineffective schools and principals, it is predictable that independent opinion surveys would not show a high degree of public confidence. The most recent poll shows correspondingly that in 1988 only 23 percent of the public rated the nation's public schools A or B. And this has changed little since 1983, the year of the report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education.

It is likewise predictable that when teachers are asked their opinions of the major causes of student difficulties in the schools they will, in self-defense, resort primarily to deficiencies in *non-school* influences. The *Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher* (1987) reported accordingly that teachers placed at the top of their list 1) children left on their own after school (51 percent) and 2) poverty in the students' homes (47 percent). It is interesting, nevertheless, that a significant percentage of the teachers surveyed pointed to defects in their schools. Thus 47 percent of the teachers found that automatic promotion to the next grade was a major problem. Another 43 percent blamed teachers "who were not adapting to individual student needs." One-third of the teachers pointed to "a boring curriculum."

Out of six proposed strategies to solve school problems, the four that were school-initiated, such as "having the school notify the parents immediately about any problem involving their child," were favored by parents more than teachers. Parents are obviously seeking ways of protecting and helping their children while getting better service for their (tax) money. More market discipline and greater choice would obviously provide them with much more of the information they evidently crave. Such increased freedom would undoubtedly result in parents moving out of "problem-area" schools in search of alternatives.

Sociologists James S. Coleman and Thomas Hoffer's *Public and Private High Schools* (1987) presents statistical findings that show that Catholic high schools bring about greater growth for the average student in both verbal and mathematical skills than do public schools. Other private schools bring about greater growth in verbal skills than do public schools, though a growth differential does not appear in mathematics. These results were obtained after family background and academic program were statistically controlled for. The achievement growth benefits of Catholic schools, but not of other private schools, were especially

strong for students who were in one way or another disadvantaged: poor, black, or Hispanic.

Coleman and Hoffer focus on the proposition that the Catholic schools compensate better than other private schools for what they call the depressive effects of functional or structural deficiencies among many families. This proposition is strongly supported by the finding that the dropout rates at Catholic schools are strikingly lower than those at public schools or other private schools.

While economists focus on education's role in creating human capital, Coleman and Hoffer emphasize the importance of what they call "social capital." Social capital exists in the relations between people. The social capital of the family is the relationships between children and parents and other close relatives. Coleman and Hoffer describe *structural* deficiency in the family as the physical absence of family members, seen especially in the single-parent family. Even the nuclear family can be deficient when grandparents, aunts, and uncles do not live close by. *Functional* deficiency is the absence of strong relationships between children and parents despite their physical proximity.

The Catholic school environment compensates for such family deficiencies, Coleman and Hoffer suggest, and in so doing has the beneficial effect on education that shows up in their statistics. The religious community, they argue, is one of the few remaining strong bases of functional community in modern society that includes both adults and children. (By contrast, neighborhoods have undergone a steady decline.)

Nevertheless Coleman and Hoffer conclude that their evidence "does not point unequivocally to widespread benefits of policies that would increase freedom of choice in education, such as vouchers that could be used in any public or private school." Their hesitancy is due to the fear that nondenominational private schools are usually not based on a "functional community with intergenerational closure." The possibility must be entertained that "the very individualism that is embodied in the choice of a private school may destroy some of the remaining social capital that can still be found in residential neighborhoods, and impose costs upon the student whose family makes such a choice."

From my perspective there would be *virtue* in destroying the social relations of some neighborhood public schools, especially those riddled by disruptive behavior linked with violence and drug abuse. The problem with many public school communities is that they exist, not by "natural" choice of individual families, but by the coercion of a public school system that assigns students to schools within administratively decreed zones. There is no evidence to show that, given a real choice, parents would not choose to send their children to a nearby school. A free market, indeed, could ultimately result in schooling that is typically within the child's immediate neighborhood. But the difference would be that schooling would be continually contestable by other potential suppliers. It is the absence of this "safety valve" from the present system that prolongs the public school problems that Coleman and Hoffer find objectionable.

Finally, it is largely because government is replacing the family as the provider of basic welfare services that we find functional deficiencies in families and the consequent loss of social capital that Coleman and Hoffer complain of. Restor-

ing parents' freedom in making choices about their children's education, to match the decision-making power parents hold in other spheres such as the feeding and clothing of their children (within the protective limits of child abuse laws), would do much for the strengthening of ties between adults and children that is the essence of creating "social capital." No doubt some mistakes would be made in the early stages, but given more practice, it is difficult to believe that expanded choice would not lead to improvement in education, especially for low-income and minority groups.

Such sentiments were expressed long ago by Adam Smith's 19th-century disciple Sir Robert Lowe, who told the 1868 School Enquiry Commission in Britain, "I myself see nothing for it but to make the parents of the children the ministers of education, and to do everything you can to give them the best information as to what is good education, and where their children can be well taught, and to leave it to

work itself out." The precise reasons for this judgment were expressed by Lowe later in the same year:

Parents have one great superiority over the Government or the administrators. . . . Their faults are mainly the corrigible faults of ignorance, not of apathy and prejudice. They have and feel the greatest interest in doing that which is for the real benefit of their children. They are the representatives of the present, the living and acting energy of a nation, which has ever owed its sure and onward progress rather to individual efforts than to public control and direction. They have the wish to arrive at a true conclusion, the data are before them, they must be the judges in the last resort, why should we shrink from making them judges at once?



The Education of Henry Adams

by Harold McCurdy

Not yesterday began
The long slide into today. But we
Have packed into a lifetime's span
A stupendous history.

Henry Adams, aware
Of what had come and was to come,
Tried in anticipation to square
The Lady with the Bomb.

His electrical dynamo
In a sense updated St. Michel
And caught some of the fire and glow
Of Chartres, but could not impel

The Twentieth Century to
The Lady's twin breasts of Law and Love.
What, then, had Time left us to do
But tear down what was above?

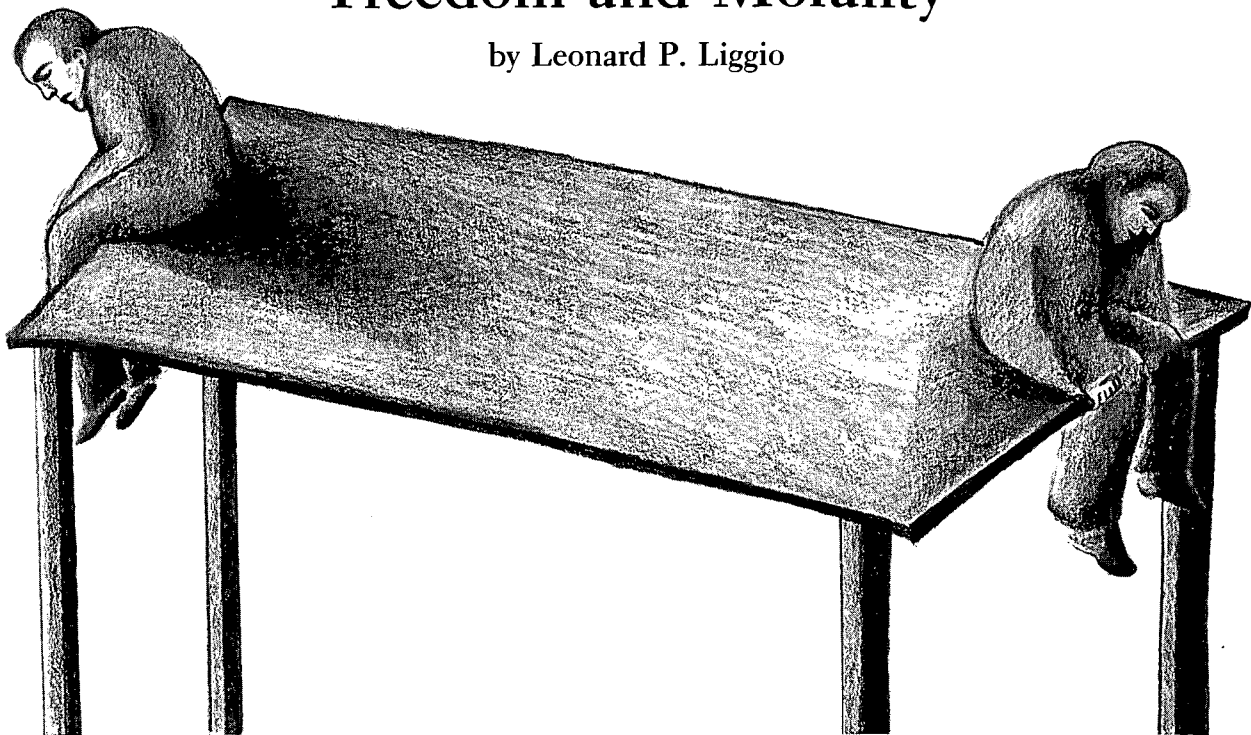
Two wars, at hideous cost,
And for the Jews and Japanese
Two varieties of holocaust,
Symptoms of one disease.

The meaning of "to exist"
Became "to undermine and rebel."
Arch-rebel and arch-existentialist,
Pound and Sartre, sold well.

A whole generation found,
Instead of St. Michel and Chartres,
The Malatesta of Ezra Pound,
The Saint Genet of Sartre.

Freedom and Morality

by Leonard P. Liggio



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

F. A. Hayek, in *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism*, offers us one insight into the nature of freedom and morality. Hayek argues that the major world religions have succeeded and endured because they reinforce the weak and imperfect points of human nature. Hayek believes that civilization is based on the family and on private property, institutions that Judaism and Christianity, in particular, have strongly emphasized. The question that Hayek should have raised, but did not, was that of the relationship between the high civilization of wealth and culture in Western Europe and America, and Western Christianity. Since the success of wealth-creation and freedom has occurred only in the areas of the world where Western Christianity gained acceptance, it is important to attempt to determine what special characteristics of Western Christianity contributed to this unique development.

The interdependence of religion and family in Western cultures was first explored by Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges in his work *The Ancient City*, and while there have been many challenges to Fustel's arguments and methods, his central insight retains its significance. Fustel found that certain traditions of Indo-European culture took strong root and flourished among the Western Indo-Europeans—the Greeks, Romans, Celts, and Germans. Among those societies, the role of religion was paramount. Religion was first and foremost the exclusive prerogative of the family. Each family formed its own religion. Each family saw itself as protected by the deceased ancestors who had gone to the afterlife. Each family formed a church.

The father and mother of the family formed the priesthood, which was exercised by the father. The father could

perform his priestly functions only during the lifetime of his wife, because the priesthood was incomplete without the mother. After her death the priesthood then passed to the oldest married son and his wife. Obviously, a culture in which the wife was an integral and necessary part of the priesthood had a high regard for women.

Central to the concept of each family as an independent religious unit was the property on which the family practiced the family religion. The property was the location of the liturgy of the family religion and as such was sacred. Especially sacred were the family burial grounds. The property of each family had a religious significance and it was sacrilege for anyone outside the family to violate its clearly defined borders. All of this is reflected in Indo-European law, and especially the law of the Greeks and Romans.

The Greco-Roman world was not isolated and had to face the challenges posed by several religions of the eastern Mediterranean. Of all the religions from the East competing for the attention of the Romans, Christianity was the most demanding and required the greatest sacrifices by demanding strict moral standards for its converts. Despite state disapproval and sporadic persecutions, more and more people converted to Christianity. After Constantine and his successors adopted it as their personal and official religion, Christianity spread throughout the Roman world and even a bit beyond. Thus, on the Indo-European foundation of the sanctity of property and of the family, found in Greek, Roman, and German cultures, there was added the formal institutions and the precepts of Christianity. For fifteen hundred years the sanctity of property and of the family permitted the emergence in the West of the greatest contributions of culture and the widest diffusion of wealth in the history of the world.

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In *The Origins of English Individualism*, Alan Macfarlane recounts the close connection in medieval English history of the development of the nuclear family and private property. This connection provides a crucial explanation of the rise of English culture and wealth, and the tradition made up of the nuclear family, private property, and individualism culminated in England's American colonies.

Unlike the nations of the Continent, England and America have maintained what was historically the legal system of the European countries: the folk-law or common law. The common law is rooted in Indo-European history and still reflects its original precepts. In the early modern era, other European countries saw their original legal systems replaced by a statist civil law system based on Roman imperial edicts. The change in continental legal systems was part of a larger strategy to create the Total State, an effort to enhance the power of the state against society and the institutions that comprise society: private property, the family, the church.

To create the modern fiscal state, the Total State, it has been necessary to fracture the institutions that stood between the state and the property it coveted—the institutions of the family and religion. In various ways, the family and religion were directly or indirectly undermined. Resistance arose all over Europe, but only in England, and then in America, was this resistance successful.

The Englishman's resistance to the modern fiscal state is the history of liberty, as Lord Acton described it. Rooted in the Puritan culture of England, the resistance to the Total State achieved success after a series of organized resistances. During the reigns of James I and Charles I the struggle became more and more intense, until in the English Civil War the king was executed and a republic declared. But the Commonwealth and the Protectorate of Cromwell moved in the direction of the modern fiscal state, and to avoid the Total State, the dead king's son was restored to the throne, but with greatly reduced powers. When Charles II's brother, James II, sought to expand those powers, he was exiled and his daughters succeeded him—Mary (with William) and Anne. The Revolution of 1688 with its Bill of Rights was not only of the greatest importance for England but for America as well. The defeat of the modern fiscal state meant the protection of private property and the institutions that gave it strength—the family and religion.

The sanctity of private property in Western society was rooted in the family religion that was universalized by Christianity. The institutions of religiously-based family and property provided the material as well as the spiritual bases of Europe's and America's culture and prosperity. In *The History of the Idea of Progress* (1980), Robert Nisbet describes the importance of Christian doctrine in the emergence of the idea of progress: "A very real philosophy of human progress appears almost from the very beginning in Christian theology, a philosophy stretching from St. Augustine (indeed his predecessors, Eusebius and Tertullian) down through the seventeenth century."

Throughout the Middle Ages science was an important part of the studies of the Schoolmen. Progress in knowledge and in mankind's prosperity went hand in hand. This scientific focus laid the foundations both for the scientific discoveries of the early modern period and "the idea of

progress." As Nisbet observes:

The fundamental structure of the idea, its governing assumptions and premises, its crucial elements—cumulative growth, continuity in time, necessity, the unfolding of potentiality, all of these and others—took shape in the West within the Christian tradition. The secular forms in which we find the idea of progress from the late seventeenth century on in Europe are inconceivable in the historical sense apart from their Christian roots.

The religious foundation in Christianity of the concepts of growth and development were rooted in the sanctity of private property and the family. This sanctity gave growth, development, and accumulation both certainty and meaning. The actual growth, development, and change in the culture and industrialization of the West was possible due to the idea of progress, which was rooted in Christianity.

The scientific discoveries and technological development that occurred in England in the 17th and 18th centuries—the scientific revolution and the Industrial Revolution—were rooted in the Christian tradition and expressed themselves in a society that still maintained the Christian-based institutions of private property and family. The resistance to the modern fiscal state gave England the ability and freedom to pursue development and progress, and to expect the fruits thereof to remain the property of the family and not of the Total State.

The American Revolution was the most important of the movements of resistance to the Total State. The revolutionary foundation was the argument from a Higher Law than the statutes of the state. The American Revolution represented a landmark in the more than two-thousand-year tradition of natural law.

Dr. F.A. Harper, founder of the Institute for Humane Studies, in "Morals and Liberty" (1971), underlines the freedom to choose as an essential part of moral frameworks.

This view—that there exists a Natural Law which rules over the affairs of human conduct—will be challenged by some who point out that man possesses the capacity for choice, that man's activity reflects a quality lacking in the chemistry of a stone and in the physical principle of the lever. But this trait of man—this capacity for choice—does not release him from the rule of cause and effect, which he can neither veto nor alter. What the capacity for choice means, instead, is that he is thereby enabled, by his own choice, to act either wisely or unwisely—that is, in either accord or discord with the truths of Natural Law. But once he has made his choice, the inviolate rule of cause and consequence takes over with an iron hand of justice, and delivers unto the doer either a reward or a penalty, as the consequence of his choice. . . .

If I surrender my freedom of choice to a ruler—by vote or otherwise—I am still subject to the superior rule of Natural Law. Although I am subservient to the ruler who orders me to violate Truth, I must still pay the penalty for the evil or foolish acts in which I engage at his command.

Christian doctrine calls attention to Original Sin, which has clouded Man's will. Otherwise our choices would be easy, not hard. It is our clouded will that has made the attainment of the good, the understanding of the good, and the selecting of the appropriate good among several seeming goods, so difficult. What is appropriate or good in one context can be evil or lead to evil in another context. For example, mankind's sexual appetite, like our other appetites, was endowed in us by God for an important and appropriate purpose. Individuals or groups who pursued sexuality outside of marriage and the family suffered and continue to suffer the evil consequences of pursuing an apparent good without the institutional guidance of the family structure.

Similarly, the tenderness and sharing that are essential parts of the family cannot be generalized outside the family structure. The attempt to treat the whole society—city, county, state, or nation—as a family and enforce the affections that are appropriate to the family, and only appropriate within a family, can only corrupt and confuse society.

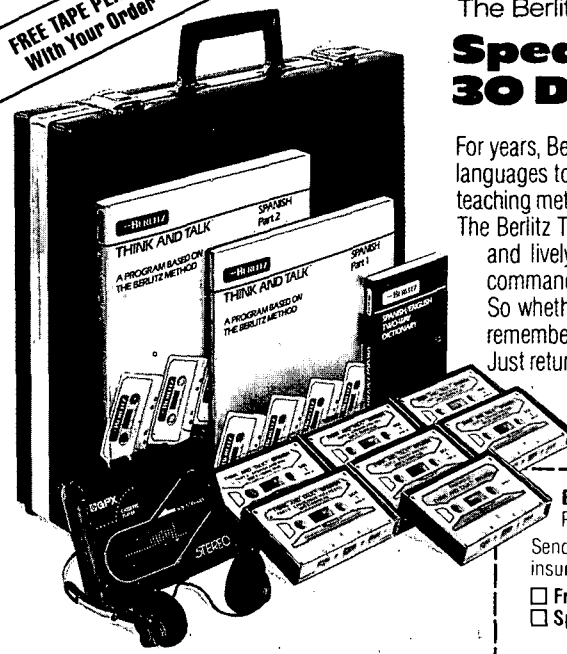
We can see in our society the consequences of separating—by legislating an artificial family, a mass extended family—tenderness and sharing from the direct training and education of children. Those who receive what the government takes from others are subjected to the commissioners of sharing and of tenderness as their children are subjected to the boards of training and education. We have the necessary separation and specialization of bureaucracies

that do not connect development in education with tenderness and sharing. The family is the premier example of an interdisciplinary, nonspecialized institution. The success of the family over the ten thousand years of man's recorded history is one of the most important sources of lessons for our society.

American society is suffering the consequences of the separation of responsibility from individual family decisions. Freedom and morality as natural entities are not able to function when responsibility is diluted or removed. Freedom and morality cannot complement each other when responsibility is eliminated. Our society suffers its current crises as a result of abandoning the social foundations on which its previous successes were built.

Every choice we make has consequences for us. We must bear the burdens of our choices. If our choices are irresponsible we suffer the consequences and learn from them. We change our choices by reforming. We reform ourselves each day in small ways that in most people eliminates the need for drastic change. Governmental institutions, on the other hand, freeze decisions and make incremental reforms almost impossible. This creates the demand for drastic results. Removing more decisions from governmental institutions will make it possible to achieve necessary reforms in an easy rather than difficult manner. The natural relationship between freedom and morality, then, can be restored to its appropriate harmony.





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Presidents' Hill

A Short Story

by Kit Reed



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Jessie and Kirk Dawson were in their late 20's when they moved into Grove Glen, and Fred Glover's wife Eva saw at once that they needed work. This was a tight community, not the kind two kids could walk into cold, so Eva took it as her responsibility. She was, after all, the boss's wife. She invited herself and Fred over for the inspection tour ("theater seats, how *spunky*"), after which she invited Kirk to offer them drinks.

Then Eva sat on the raw terrace outside the half-finished house, crossing her sleek, waxed legs and giving advice in a whiskey voice.

"Children. If you want to be invited, you'll have to entertain. When we were getting started Fred and I used to give huge bashes four times a year." She looked over at Fred, who was busy numbering the available kinds of ground cover for Kirk. "Didn't we, Fred?"

Fred did not so much answer as hum, a little buzz that might have been a tribute to the waning summer, their long lives together, the shift of light that warned of approaching fall. "Most people around here go in for organic gardening," he went on telling Kirk. "Garlic instead of pesticides. Bags of human hair."

"You'd look so much prettier with contact lenses," Eva told Jessie. "You don't have to go around looking like a schoolteacher." In the next breath she cautioned: "Never outdress your guests."

"But it's the first time I've been able to afford decent clothes."

"Sweetie, you're already one up on us. You're young."

Jessie saw that the tan, the elegant linen shorts, the silk

shirt were carefully put together to distract from the lines in Eva's face, beginning rings around her neck. "I'm sorry."

Eva said to Fred, "Aren't they adorable?"

Jessie murmured, "Lord!"

But Fred was showing Kirk how to drown slugs in dishes of beer.

"It's not your fault you're young," Eva said, putting on maturity like a badge; she seemed so *seasoned*! "These days I shudder every time I see the first red leaf."

Fred smiled indulgently. "Eva, I think these kids have had enough of us for now."

"Oh no," Kirk said in haste.

But Jessie was protesting. "Kids!"

"Shh," Eva said in a there-there tone. "Shh."

She couldn't help it if she and Kirk were the youngest couple here. He looked like a stripling next to the others with their grave expressions and their substantial adult silhouettes. Their solidity made Kirk seem slight and unsteady as a setter puppy, who could demolish small objects with a single wag of the tail. All this, Fred explained, was the result of conscious effort: "Who wants to do business with a young guy?" The women had a sheen Jessie envied; they were so far ahead that it gave her the feeling she was running along behind, calling after them: Wait up!

Two months ago Kirk and Jessie were sitting around on mattresses in student apartments; now they were here. Jessie put on stockings and high heels to teach; Kirk moved into dark suits and sober ties. Colliding in front of the hall mirror, they had to laugh. They even had a mortgage now. The realtor had halted them in the middle of the newly sodded front lawn to point out the potential for upgrading. In time they would leave their cookie-cutter split level for one of the architects' houses perched on Presidents' Hill.

Kit Reed's most recent novel is *Catholic Girls*. She teaches fiction writing at Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

The people on the hill threw the best parties. Everybody said so. Fred and Eva gave supper dances in their lofty box with its swastika of porches, with taped music drifting out over the tops of the trees. Howard Patterson, who ran the bank, preferred gourmet dinners for twelve; she cooked but he whipped into the kitchen at the last minute to make zabaglione for dessert. Larry the ophthalmologist and his wife Cindy liked to have guests for cocktails and supper around the pool even after it was too late in the season to sit outside without coats. Archie Leverett held what he called massive retaliations—an even hundred invited for buffet, with nothing but booze and finger sandwiches. He did it to renew his credit, he said—one bash and he could eat out every night of the year.

It was balding, funny-looking Archie who took Kirk and Jessie in hand, slouching at their kitchen table like just another kid. He was an excellent guest, an unexpected third for dinner, always welcome because he was wicked and paid for their kindness with community secrets none of the others would admit. Once or twice when he was sitting at their table Jessie saw blue patches under his eyes and guessed at his level of exhaustion: not easy to have to sing for your supper every single night.

"My dears," he said to Jessie and Kirk, "watch out for Anthony, he flits from flower to flower, and you never know whether you're a flower or not."

He defined the territory and identified the seasons: "You'd better know, we're in a year of dancing and petty flirtation. Have fun but don't get hurt."

Wait a minute, Jessie thought. We're not even all grown up.

Still, being invited was better than not being invited. If they went out often enough people might get used to them. Being on the inside was always better than being on the outside; it was always better to belong. She liked going to the store for the Sunday papers to discover neighbors drifting in like convalescents, redolent of the night before, disabled veterans of last night's party comparing notes. What pleasures had they shared; what secrets did they know? It was not so much troubling as sad to leave the movies on a quiet Saturday night and discover the rest of the world was at somebody's party—fleets of cars parked in front of Fred and Eva's house. *Everybody's* there, she'd say mournfully, not knowing quite who *everybody* was.

The parties weren't all that good, really; the best moment always came in front of the hall mirror as she and Kirk prepared expressions to wear when they went out. But exclusion hurt, and Jessie nursed the suspicion that there were better times available; once she and Kirk were accepted life here would open like a rose.

They were invited more often, but had they been accepted? It was hard to know. When a party took off without them Jessie looked at Kirk with raccoon eyes: Maybe they forgot. He told her not to brood, these people weren't worth it, and she said, I know, I know. Still she imagined crunching through the bushes outside those parties to scratch on one of the glowing windows, those assembled turning in varying degrees of shock as she climbed over the sill and presented herself with an ingratiating cartoon grin. *Listen, we're really terrific people. Just give us a chance.*

"Your time will come," Archie said, smiling ingenuously. His salt-and-pepper hair was rumpled like a boy's. He appeared regularly on Thursdays now because he knew Jessie got off early and liked to cook all afternoon. Because he had no household, he was welcome in all the houses: friend, brother, spare man, potential romance but potential only, which extended the possibilities into infinity; in his own strange way he was also ageless, with no wife to weigh him down and no children growing up, yardsticks measuring him off. "Don't worry," he said kindly, "You're so new they haven't found *out* about you; it's almost your turn to be picked up and twirled around."

Kirk said, "Do we want that?"

"Everybody wants to be a flower at least some of the time." Archie cast a judgmental look around the kitchen. "You're about ready. Let's help things along. You're giving a cocktail party the Sunday after Thanksgiving," he said. "Dinners are so treacherous. You can kill yourself making the perfect food and lose it all with the wrong guest mix. Now cocktails. Cocktails are safe."

"Safe?"

"People don't stay around long enough to get into trouble," Archie said.

Jessie felt like a child in her pajamas watching the grown-ups from the top of the stairs. "Oh Archie, maybe that's what we want."

He shook his head. "When it gets too late people's fangs begin to show."

"You're making it up."

"Even a man who says his prayers . . . Listen, it's like the full moon in werewolf country; you don't want to be around."

Inside her something was teetering. "Maybe we do."

"Not yet," he said. "Not until you're stronger. You don't want to end up getting hurt."

Kirk said, "Maybe you'd better listen to the wisdom of our native beater."

"Both of you, stop."

So Archie helped them make up the list, providing pocket biographies as he went. "Bob Shortell's secret is that he was called Piggy in college; he's in shape now but you can see the stretch marks if you catch him in a bathing suit." "Cindy and Larry went to Rio for plastic surgery—a nip here, a tuck there—they cut off anything that flops." "Lester Hancock has cancer but it's a secret; left testicle." "Howard never got over the girl he loved in college; she went to the ladies' room at the top of the Bailey building and dropped like a stone."

"That's very sad."

"It explains a lot of things."

While Jessie fed on it, gossip made Kirk uneasy. "I suppose you're going to tell me everybody has some terrible secret, even Fred and Eva."

"After a certain age, no one is safe."

Jessie started; something had changed in the room; looking at Archie now in the strong overhead light she saw that he had not changed but his aura was changing; there was a disturbance in the air behind him, as if of the shifting of large shapes; he was—sick? In danger? She did not know. It was as if behind him, the abyss was opening—had always been there. "Oh, Archie," she cried.

His eyes widened: What? What is it? What?

Alarmed, she plunged in after him, bent on retrieval. "You're not old!" she cried.

Archie blinked; the shadows faded. He grinned that boy grin. "Certainly not. What's all the fuss about?"

Their party was a grand success. The others all came in their autumn best, men and women in rusty tweeds and brilliant colors, everybody delighted to be at a party on this long weekend that usually died on Friday night because everybody assumed that everybody else had planned. Because Kirk and Jessie were new everybody behaved well, and if the outlines of their bodies were beginning to blur or the skin of their faces softened, forming new folds, still they talked and laughed with conviction; Jessie remembers wondering on too many nights, Where is everybody? Her heart bounced:

Everybody is here.

Everybody got pleasantly buzzed but not messy and, in a spirit of solidarity, Fred let it drop that if the kids knew where they could get a joint he'd love to smoke. When the party was over everybody spilled out onto the sidewalk laughing, chattering in the black late afternoon. Several clumped to go to restaurants and others asked friends to pickup suppers at home.

Archie lingered in the living room, which was unnaturally silent and still blue with smoke, beginning to smell sour. "Bless you, my children, it is accomplished. Now you're on everybody's list."

Jessie offered, because he'd expect it, "Stay for supper. We're not cleaning up until tomorrow, I promise."

"Thanks, but I have a better offer," he said, looking rumpled but game. "The Glovers are burning steaks."

The tempo quickened in December. There was such a spasm of festivity that Jessie began to complain. She and Kirk had slid from too much staying in to too much going out, sleeping late after Friday's party, convalescing Saturdays so they'd be ready for the party that night. Jessie found herself looking forward to the stilly fastness of January, when she and Kirk could be snowed in.

Archie had them to that year's massive retaliation, which was followed by parties at the Stoners' and the Shortells'. If there was an urgency to the pace, fueled by Lester Hancock's physical decline, Kirk and Jessie would not see it because they hardly knew Lester and were so new at life that they didn't recognize the signs. People began being discovered in alarming situations: public drunkenness, illicit grapplings.

Sunspots, Archie said. It happened every few years. When the storm windows came off in the spring and they got cut out of their winter underwear there would be a few surprises, he said.

Jessie and Kirk clung together for mutual protection. If she lost track of him at some big party she knew she'd find him backed into the refrigerator or cornered in some candle-lit alcove, signaling over some predatory woman's head with his teeth bared in a desperate grin. She'd spring to the rescue, even as he was pledged to keep track and rescue her.

"Bob Shortell is Kirk's new boss, you know," Eva said over the Sunday paper rack.

Remembering how she yearned to be part of these conversations, Jessie caught herself thinking: *Is this all?* "I thought Fred was."

"Bob's been moved in. He thinks you don't like him."

"That letch?"

"Honey, it wouldn't cost you anything to flirt with him."

"Is that what that was?"

"Think of it as a form of flattery."

"I think it's creepy," Jessie said. What she meant was: But he's *old*.

It seemed best to stay out of his way. Dancing, she and Kirk danced together best, danced to safety as lightly as they could. Except they could not quit blundering into unexpected couples: Bob and the vet's new wife slow-dancing in the bathroom; feisty Howard mumbling with his hand balled in the soft spot in Eva's neck; skinny Lester Hancock hugging Beth with intense concentration, as if his life depended on it. Going home, Jessie and Kirk would ask each other: Are we going to be like that? No. How could they? It was tacit. They would never. No.

◆
**She'd always envied these people their
assurance and maturity, their style, the fact
that they could accept or exclude at will,
but at what price?**
◆

Bob Shortell's diagnosis was made the day before Fred and Eva's Christmas supper dance; he was getting the news from his physician around the time Beth took Howard to the emergency room with chest pains. And Lester—poor Lester might not be well enough to come.

The party had been scheduled for months; Fred and Eva had hired a live band this time and after agonized consultation with most of the guest list, they decided it would be silly and wasteful not to go ahead. It's what Howard and poor Lester would want, and what Bob Shortell needed, or so they said. When a small delegation stopped by the hospital on the way to the party with flowers and a silver shaker of Martinis for Howard, Beth met them in the hall with tears in her eyes and said Howard couldn't see them right now. She knew he'd appreciate everybody coming like this, and they'd both be thinking of everybody at the party thinking of them.

By the time Jessie and Kirk got to Fred and Eva's party there was a thin crust of snow silvering the hillside and light crashed out of all the windows, making every surface glitter. She and Kirk could hear the music even from here; there were people dancing on the porches in spite of the cold. Jessie had a new dress that rode over her body in a silky sweep, and her legs felt sleek and strong in the icy pantyhose; she could not have said precisely why she was so conscious of her body tonight, its youth, her health, but as she and Kirk went inside she put it before her like a shield.

This was the biggest party of the year, and everybody here seemed to have gotten a head start, from Cindy, who was sitting on several men's laps at once, which she usually did only after midnight, to Bob, who could not stop running his knuckles down the V in the new law clerk's satin dress. There was a surprising-looking person on the sofa in a white suit and pointed shoes; he could have come straight out of a

foreign movie, or downtown Algiers. He listened to Eva babble with a bright, feral, uncomprehending grin. Some people were already unsteady on their feet and the edges of Eva's hors d'oeuvres had begun to curl. Jessie and Kirk picked up drinks quickly, with the sense that once again the party had left without them: *Wait up!* Then they fell into a dance, bodies matching perfectly, whirling in the illusion of escape.

Here was Lester after all; when he cut in Jessie turned dutifully but reluctantly, readjusting her steps as he waltzed her away with fevered grace.

"You know," he said, when he finally said anything, "I'm donating my organs to Harvard."

"Oh Lester, it's much too early to think about that." It was not. She outweighed Lester now.

"That is, if they'll *take* them." His hold was so light that his bones must have been hollow, like a bird's. "I'd be honored if you'd witness this."

"Of course," she said, "but that won't be for years."

He'd let her go and was fumbling in his pocket. "I've brought along the instrument."

So she sat soberly in a little knot with Fred and Kirk and a woman she didn't know while Lester filled in the appropriate blanks and signed, and made them sign.

When Lester stashed the document and Fred pulled her up to dance, Jessie was relieved: good old Fred. She had to keep moving. Larry and Cindy were fighting in one corner while the vet's wife cried all by herself in another, and in the alcove the less aggressive halves of two couples were clinging for dear life. Barbara Shortell, who was getting fat, hunched over the buffet, shoving fruitcake into her mouth. All this, and it wasn't even ten o'clock. In the library where Fred took her when the piece ended, people clumped around the fireplace, gathering around the flames as if to ward off wolves, or whatever it was that waited outside, stalking in the dark.

Fred startled her, finishing a sentence she hadn't even heard. "Pubic hair."

"What?"

"All the way up to her navel. Amazing. How far up is yours?"

"I was wondering why Lester brought that to the party," she said too quickly, disturbed. "A living will."

Bob Shortell slid into the circle on her other side. "You're much too young to understand."

"Oh Lester's just on the rag," Fred said. "All he has left to think about. You know he isn't getting any."

"But it's cancer!"

"His wife thinks it's AIDS. So much for sex."

In the shadows somebody said, *sotto voce*, "He's not the only one."

"Poor Howard, when he gets out he'll have to keep his prick in a sling, you know how heart patients are."

"Not me," Bob said, weaving a spell to keep away dark powers.

"Not me," Fred said.

From the darkness, somebody else completed the charm, saying bluffly, "Not me."

Jessie would not wait to find out who it was that asked, as she wheeled and fled them, "What about you? I bet you're

getting enough," nor would she know who said disgustedly, "Kids. Kids always get enough."

She wanted not to cry. *I'm not a kid.*

She went looking for Kirk with a sense of panic, beating her way through the thicket of dancers and locking on to him like a heat-seeking missile. His arm went up to encircle her and when she quit shaking they began to dance, which they did until Spink, she thought it was, tried to cut in and she dragged Kirk out onto one of the porches, hoarse with desperation, whispering, "What's the matter with everybody, what's the *matter* with everybody?"

"It's just their way of communicating," Kirk said without having to ask.

"It's so *sad*." It was. She'd always envied these people their assurance and maturity, their style, the fact that they could accept or exclude at will, but at what price? Something had happened to these people between the time when they moved to this place as kids themselves and now, and she could not for the life of her figure out what. All she could see was the way they looked at the end of these parties, all these dressed-up people with their drawn faces and smirched mouths and their evening spoiled by emotional exhaustion and too much drink. How high were their hopes when they set out tonight and what's happened to them between then and now? What terrible misfortune has befallen them? "I wish they could just be happy and have a good time."

Kirk said, "That's what they're trying to do."

"Well it isn't working," she said mournfully.

"Don't you think they want it to work?" He crunched her flowers, hugging her. "Oh honey, Howard is very bad. Beth just called." He pulled her back to the dance floor. "Poor Beth."

"Oh, poor *everybody*," she cried, but she could not get over the way so many people could aim for one mark and hit another, or how sad it was. Bereft, she clung to Kirk and whirled in the beginning understanding that they had been set down at the beginning of the first mile of a long road, on a journey she could not bear to contemplate. "Please don't let us end up like that."

Blindly, Kirk promised. "We'll never end up like that."

She was gulping air. "I have to get out of here."

Which was how they happened upon Archie and Eva, half-dressed and tangled in Eva's mop corner next to the back door, the two of them clinging in spite of Fred and the presence of Archie's beau in his white suit, marooned on the living room sofa while Archie tried to recapture something here; he looked at them over Eva's head with a rueful twinkle as they gasped and tried to back out.

"I tried to tell you," Archie said.

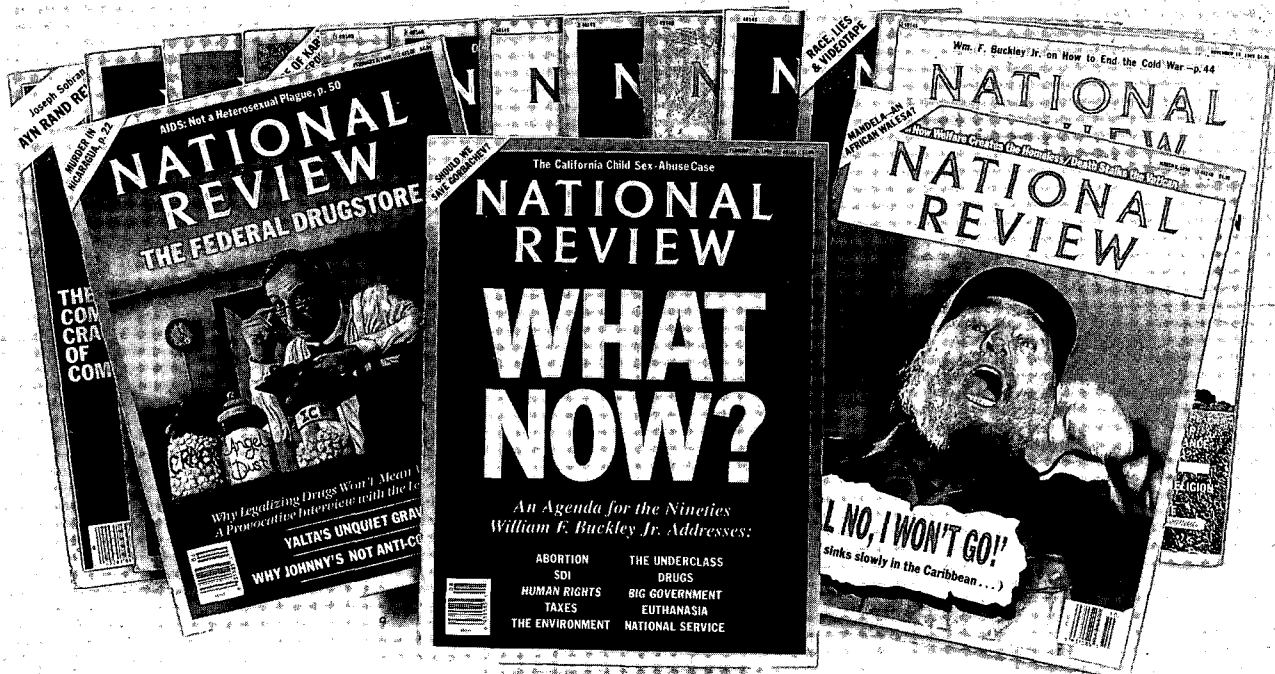
"W-we were just wondering about poor Howard."

Then Eva—her friend! turned and lashed out at her. "You! Fools! What do you care? You're young."

As they fled they could hear her spitting, driving them out with a fervor that sped them into the darkness, choking on nervous laughter. They heard Eva railing: "You. You think you are so holy, just like all the saints and popes!"

And the mitigating, or were they spiteful words of Archie, following: "Hush, sweetness. Don't worry. They won't be young for long."





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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Inventing History

by John Wauck

"History, in general, only informs us what bad government is."

—Thomas Jefferson

The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics: The Myrdals and the Interwar Population Crisis
by Allan Carlson
New Brunswick, New Jersey:
Transaction Publishers; 235 pp.,
\$39.95

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If there were an award for the most successful revolutionaries of the 20th century, two relatively unsung yet worthy candidates would be Gunnar and Alva Myrdal. The Swedish husband-and-wife team has exerted an alarmingly pervasive influence upon modern society, in part because their bloodless, bureaucratic revolution was too low-key to inspire the violent opposition that has undermined the revolutionary legacy of so many other candidates.

In *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics: The Myrdals and the Interwar Population Crisis*, Allan Carlson, author of a recent study on the contemporary American family, returns to the subject of his doctoral dissertation: the pivotal role the Myrdals played in

shaping modern Swedish society. The book, which Carlson calls an "intellectual political biography," reveals how, in the course of four years (1934-1938), one man and one woman decisively redirected the course of an entire society. Carlson highlights the ways in which ideologues can manipulate the often ambiguous data of sociological research and the crucial importance of individuals in perceiving and even inventing historical "trends." His exhaustively researched and documented analysis yields lessons that many other societies have yet to learn.

Gunnar Myrdal was born in 1898 in a rural Swedish town. While studying economics at the University of Stockholm, he met an extremely intelligent liberal arts student, four years his junior, named Alva Reimer, whose father was involved in labor unions and the Social Democratic Party in Uppsala. Having studied literature, religion, and psychology, and possessing strong socialist and feminist sympathies, Alva seems to have been the prototypical 20th-century radical female intellectual. She married Gunnar Myrdal in 1924, and after a research trip to the United States in 1929, financed by

fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation, the couple became convinced that Swedish society was in need of radical reforms. While Gunnar focused on demographic and economic questions, Alva was preoccupied with children's issues and the obsolescence of the traditional family. It is ironic that, to a significant extent, Sweden's radical social policy was inspired and funded by American sources.

Without question, Swedish society was in trouble. In 1933, Sweden recorded the lowest peacetime birthrate of any modern nation. The net reproduction rate was below replacement level. According to data from 1927, only 5.6 percent of the population attended Sunday communion. As the structure of agrarian society unraveled in the 19th century, the traditional practice of *frieri*—a courtship custom that allowed premarital sex—became less an anticipation of marriage than simple fornication and a source of illegitimacy.

In the obvious need for "pro-natalist" policies to counteract the declining birthrate, the Myrdals saw a justification for their radical reforms, and their 1934 book, *The Crisis in the*

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Population Question, placed them at the center of policy debate. Concerned that previous sociology had been marred by unspoken commitments to existing social structures, they advocated an approach to social policy based on the premise that "All institutional factors . . . can be changed." A central contention of their book was that Swedes were having fewer children because of inadequate urban housing. Studies showing that many small families with ample finances actually *chose* to live in substandard housing convinced the Myrdals not that housing was not the problem but that parents could not be trusted with cash benefits; state assistance would have to be "in kind." Claiming the "modern miniature family is . . . an abnormal situation for a child," the Myrdals pushed for "collective houses," apartment houses with a single nursery and single kitchen for the entire building.

The ideas in *Crisis in the Population Question* began to be converted into public policy after Gunnar Myrdal was appointed to Sweden's Population Commission in 1935, for the policy recommendations of the Commission were taken seriously by Sweden's *Riksdag*. As its most active member, Myrdal oversaw the Commission's numerous reports on subjects such as marriage loans, working women, maternity benefits, taxes, sex education, and birth control. The Commission recommended marriage loans to encourage earlier and presumably more fruitful unions. It also recommended sex-education classes, including information about birth control as a natural and normal part of marriage, beginning in the third grade. Although Sweden's problem was population decline, the Commission recommended the repeal of (admittedly ineffective) laws against birth control; the Myrdal argument maintained that a system of strictly voluntary parenthood (made possible by birth control) plus economic support from the state would increase the birthrate.

At the same time, Alva Myrdal was wielding similar influence, though on a smaller scale, through the Women's Work Committee and her own school for teachers, the Social Pedagogical Institute. The Women's Work Committee urged the state to accept female Lutheran clergy, female prison guards,

and female gym teachers in boys' high schools. Alva's Institute encouraged gender neutral toys and games in order to overcome sexual stereotyping.

The approach of World War II and the departure of the Myrdals for the United States in 1938 brought an end to their active involvement in Swedish social reform, but by then they had already transformed public policy in significant ways.

They had also demonstrated just how much could be accomplished by a few dedicated and energetic individuals. Besides receiving grants from the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations to pursue their policy-shaping sociology, the Myrdals invested their own money in distributing countless reports and analyses to study groups and seminars throughout the nation. Personal magnetism also played a part in their effectiveness. By 1938, Alva Myrdal was the seventh most popular woman in Sweden, a ranking that placed her somewhere between Greta Garbo and Ingrid Bergman. Indefatigable propagandists, the Myrdals set the terms of debate, both in society and in the important official committees to which they belonged. The Myrdal name was synonymous with family and fertility matters; in fact, things reached a point where "to myrdal" became a popular euphemism for "to copulate."

Carlson's account of the Myrdals' work reveals a striking feature of sociological analysis that might be called "selective inevitability." Although they insisted that "all institutional factors . . . can be changed," the Myrdals were forever encountering inevitable "social facts": popular acceptance of birth control, working mothers, small families, the obsolescence of traditional family arrangements. A shameless double standard was at work. Whatever the Myrdals disliked could be changed; whatever already suited their plans was an inevitable "social fact." The inevitability was unidirectional. Centuries of housewifery were not inevitable, but working mothers were. Resistance to birth control was a temporary attitude; its acceptance was a "social fact."

Related to this selective inevitability is the curious way in which historical necessities often seem to need a helping hand from the social engineer. One might suppose that if socioeconomic

developments are said to be altering the family as an institution, then the transformation will occur spontaneously. But no. Radical new laws and state intervention are required to ensure that prophecies about the demise of the traditional family are fulfilled. The line between adapting to the future and creating it is sometimes hard to detect.

The Myrdals' story also shows the enormous value that "crises" can have for social reformers. In response to a "crisis," all manner of radical changes can be introduced; "emergency measures" are called for. The economic crisis of the 30's was the justification for Roosevelt's New Deal in the United States; it was the demographic crisis of the 30's that paved the way for Sweden's domestic "new deal." The atmosphere of "crisis" helps people swallow the fallacious rhetoric of "Something must be done"—regardless of whether it will actually help the situation. Untested policies are thus implemented, often, as in the case of Sweden, without any plans for verification. The "AIDS crisis" has become a similar tool for drastically reforming society's attitude toward homosexuality: it is "necessary" to teach small children about homosexuality; it is "necessary" to advertise condoms in public; it is "necessary" to use tax revenue to distribute needles to drug addicts; it is "necessary" to allocate disproportionate funding to AIDS research. At the same time, it is not necessary to quarantine homosexuals or to discourage homosexual behavior, though such measures might well reduce the incidence of AIDS.

If Sweden's *Riksdag* had attempted to verify the effectiveness of the Myrdals' recommendations, it might have been surprised. Carlson notes that couples who took advantage of the marriage loan program actually had fewer children (and twice as many divorces!) as couples who did not. Today Sweden has the world's lowest marriage rate, and fertility is still below replacement level. Half of Swedish men between the ages of 25 and 29 are cohabiting, and half of Swedish children are illegitimate (their fathers are, for all practical purposes, the state). Eighty-five percent of Swedish mothers with children under the age of seven are working.

Viewing these long-term conse-

quences of policies that were supposedly designed for “pro-natalist” purposes, Carlson raises the very pertinent question of whether it is proper to say that the Myrdals “failed.” The answer, it seems, is no. Carlson makes clear that their “pro-natalism” amounted to little more than a healthy fear of economic collapse and national extinction. Their concern for marriage and family was entirely consequentialist, as can be seen from the failure to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate unions: whatever produces children is good for the state. Human beings were not valuable in themselves (the Myrdals countenanced forced sterilization for the mentally ill, the “genetically defective,” and criminals) but as instruments of the state: human beings were necessary to fill jobs, to pay taxes, and to breed more job-filling taxpayers.

Alva Myrdal liked to condemn the “unbridled individualism which char-

acterizes the . . . bourgeois culture” of capitalism. Yet her militant feminism and hostility toward the traditional family made her sing the praises of “individual self-sufficiency.” She failed to realize that, as Joseph Schumpeter put it, “feminism is an essentially capitalistic phenomenon.” In the battle between social welfare and feminist individualism, feminism won. Thus, the family wage, formerly part of the Social Democratic Party agenda, became oppressive in the eyes of Alva Myrdal. In 1971, the Swedish Commission on New Marriage Law claimed a need to form “a society in which every adult takes responsibility for himself without being economically dependent on another”—bourgeois individualism in a socialist welfare state.

The Myrdals’ analysis of the Swedish birth dearth reveals the extent to which they bought into the materialis-

tic premises they condemned. Their plan to increase fertility fostered rather than combated selfish individualism. It capitulated to selfishness by attempting to make children compatible with purely economic self-interest. They ignored the wise objection of Sweden’s husband-and-wife social-policy team, Eli and Ebba Heckscher, who said that fertility rates would never be raised by taking children from their mothers and giving them to the state. The Heckschers’ objection points to a profound truth: the state can only flourish by recognizing the essential preeminence of the family.

The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics should be required reading for anyone interested in Sweden’s present situation, but it is perhaps most interesting as a cautionary tale for policymakers in the United States who, in the name of “family policy,” are tempted to turn their backs on the family. ◀

The Life Fitting

by Dick Allen

“Make it last long, if possible,”
You tell the tailor mumbling through
The silver needles in his mouth for you
To hold still and stand tall

While he adjusts for waistband slack
And proper cuffs. “And let it be
Nothing awfully dull or cheaply flashy,
Thumb-pinched out of the rack.”

Since you’ve inherited the curse
Of likening books to gods and men,
And library tables wear elbows thin,
You’d like them reinforced.

Let its weave show, but not show off:
Far better glances than cold stares
Dismissing you for putting on false airs
With the cut of your cloth.

It should be something that can go
(Down any street your fancy runs)
As well with old school ties as newer ones,
Silk cravat or string bow.

And it should jump at chances, yet
Not chase them round too far a bend,
Be something to relax in at day’s end,
Its wrinkles smoothing out.

“What, you want miracles?” he asks,
“Love, money, fame—the whole shebang?
Step to the mirrors, let’s see how it’ll hang
And how much fat it masks.”

Your body, soul and mind obey,
Split into left and right and straight ahead.
He frowns and plucks your sleeve for one loose thread.
“Not looking bad today,”

He tells you, writes down measurements
In his spiral-ring pad, then nods
To his assistant, as if taking odds
Against all comers’ bets,

Chalkmarks the shoulders, tacks the neck,
Checks the interlining’s full
(So hidden that it can’t be seen at all),
Then, eyes rolling, steps back.

“You’ve been told,” he says, “that whether
It’s sharkskin, wool, poplin, or tweed,
Such special orders can’t be guaranteed
Against improper wear?”

You have. You shake his outstretched hand,
Your numbered claim check safe and sound
Inside your billfold (slim and leather-bound),
And feel, at last, name brand.

A Representative Man

by Eugene D. Genovese

"A well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one."

—Thomas Carlyle

Carolina Cavalier: The Life and Mind of James Johnston Pettigrew

by Clyde N. Wilson

Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press; 303 pp., \$35.00

Even in these dreariest of days in academia, when American history has largely become a plaything for canting ideologues, the Old South continues to attract outstanding talent. Fine books and articles continue to appear, as Clyde Wilson's *Carolina Cavalier* attests, notwithstanding the pressure from a kind of Gresham's Law. The times call for adherence to the correct ideological line, which at its increasingly popular extreme regards the Old South as a rehearsal for Nazi Germany and demands for the eradication of all traces of the conservative voices that have loomed so large in Southern history. And in our leading professional associations, their journals, and college classrooms the correct line prevails.

The continued interest in the Old South proceeds from the worst and best of reasons. The worst includes the step-by-step domination of departments of history in our Southern as well as northern universities by those for whom the Southern Tradition, as Richard Weaver aptly called it, and all its works represent an evil past to be exorcised by all means, fair and foul. It is no longer enough to reject slavery, segregation, and racism. Virtually every positive feature of the mainstream Southern experience must be rejected as well in order to avoid charges of indulging in racist and pro-slavery apologetics. We are being lavishly entertained by a new philosophy of history that has the supreme merit of reducibility to four words: "Black, good; white, bad."

The prevalence of this view in the

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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

north need not agitate us, for it has ever been thus. Its prevalence in the South is another matter, about which prudence dictates silence from carpetbaggers like myself. Prudence never having been my strongest suit, however, I shall risk the suggestion that my fellow carpetbaggers, who today inundate Southern universities with generally unfortunate consequences, have

much less to answer for than do the scalawags who seem to think that a search for identity requires total repudiation of a great and noble, if deeply flawed, regional culture. That such a total repudiation could only flow from transparent self-hatred does not seem to deter them. Nor do they seem to understand that self-hatred is no more attractive in white Southerners than it is in Jews, blacks, Sicilian-Americans, or anyone else.

The best reasons for the continued interest in the Old South include not only a perennial quest for the origins of the War that remains our greatest national trauma, but a strong sense that there is much to be learned here about the tragic nature of the historical dimension of the human condition. Honest historians, whatever their specific viewpoint, cannot avoid a confrontation with that tragic dimension, for there is abundant evidence of a hegemonic slaveholding class (and a yeomanry) that, notwithstanding its full share of ogres and timeservers, boasted a host of extraordinary men and women: God-fearing, courageous, socially and morally responsible, and tough. Such historians cannot avoid a confrontation with the lives of the slaveholders who embodied those qualities and yet proved to be the agents of the greatest enormity of the age—men and women who, whatever their virtues, were periodically, if not daily, driven to the acts of savagery toward black people that their very survival as owners of human flesh required.

The coexistence of these qualities, which defined the slaveholders—and even many of the yeomen—who accepted the slave society into which they were born, manifested itself differently in accordance with region, income, social status, personal temperament, and much else; still, in one manifestation or another, those qualities constantly recurred. The elite slaveholders of the Virginia tidewater or the Carolina low country might not qualify as "typical," but they did em-

body the best and worst characteristics of the Southern slaveholders as a social class. And notwithstanding the gross categories that currently obsess social historians, certain figures emerge as representative—as worthy of study both as impressive individuals and as men whose lives illuminate the course of Southern civilization.

James Johnston Pettigrew, born into the elite of the North Carolina low country and subsequently a resident of Charleston, was one of those representative men. Remembered primarily, if at all, as a minor Confederate military commander, he displayed exemplary courage at Gettysburg and elsewhere, only to have his reputation posthumously sullied by unfair criticism. He deserves to be remembered for much more, including his marvelous (if virtually unread) book *Notes on Spain and the Spaniards in the Summer of 1859, with a Glance at Sardinia* (1861). He was barely 35 when he fell during a skirmish on the Potomac in 1863, but during his short life he made a decisive

impact on the lives of all who knew him, including his kinsman James L. Petigru, the celebrated intransigent Unionist, who, as perhaps South Carolina's greatest lawyer, sponsored Pettigrew's own legal career in Charleston.

Yet, as Clyde Wilson demonstrates in this first-rate study of the man, his world, and his times, Pettigrew's influence far transcended his efforts on the battlefield, in the courts and state legislature, and as a writer. One of the more curious, telling, and little appreciated aspects of life in the Old South was the intellectual vigor displayed by a generally well-educated slaveholding class. A surprising number of the most impressive members of that class scorned the limelight and the lure of fame, which, to be sure, attracted many others. Pettigrew, like no few of his peers, restricted his sphere of influence to those privy to the example set by his everyday life. William H. Trescot, another largely forgotten man, though he is the father of American diplomatic history and a brilliant scholar and theorist, said in his eulogy that Pettigrew's achievements could not begin to reveal the depth and breadth of his influence on his contemporaries: "The influence was in himself. . . . He was a man who desired to be, and not to seem." Trescot could easily have been describing Langdon Cheves or any number of other Carolinians of the day.

Pettigrew has had to wait a long time for a biographer, but he could not have hoped to find a better one than Clyde Wilson. A professor of history at the University of South Carolina, Wilson is best known to historians as the superb editor of the *Papers of John C. Calhoun* (University of South Carolina Press: 18 volumes, more coming) and to the general public as a contributor to *Chronicles* and other journals, and as editor of that stimulating manifesto of Southern conservatism *Why the South Will Survive* (University of Georgia Press, 1981). A careful scholar who has thought hard and deep about his beloved South, he displays an unusually strong feel for the society of the Old South as it existed rather than as it is presented by historians who read the conditions and perspectives of the late 19th and 20th centuries backwards into it. Wilson is, in short, an exemplary historian who, in this book, displays his formidable talent.

Wilson writes gracefully and well, unfolding, so far as possible, his narrative in a manner that carries its own interpretation. But when, as happens from time to time, an interpretive set-piece is required, he rises to the challenge, as in his brief but strong discussions of the Southern concepts of chivalry and the gentleman, the nature of the much misunderstood Southern Unionism, and the relations of planters to yeomen. For good measure, he provides an incisive analysis of the psyche of this fascinating man. In all, Wilson tells the story of an arresting life and, in so doing, offers the public an invaluable introduction to essential aspects of life in the Old South and offers specialists a no less invaluable consideration of long disputed topics.

Wilson recounts Pettigrew's active if sadly foreshortened life as a product of one of North Carolina's prominent families; as a young resident on a particularly interesting plantation; as a gifted student at the justly celebrated Bingham Academy and at the University of North Carolina; as an observer of Charleston, where he practiced law; as a state legislator who helped lead the fight against the movement to reopen the African slave trade; as a critic of Robert Barnwell Rhett and the fire-eaters and of the political legacy of the great Calhoun; as a Unionist who finally crossed over and supported secession; and as a student, traveler, and penetrating observer in Europe. In each case Wilson unobtrusively delineates Pettigrew's unique qualities and individual performance in a manner that reveals the ways in which—and the extent to which—he deserves to rank as a representative man. And in each case Wilson sheds light on the society and the times: on education and religion, on ideological currents and political battles, on the legal profession and the literary life.

As a bonus, Wilson provides a well-crafted examination of *Spain and the Spaniards*, a book that ought to be republished and studied carefully as well as read for pleasure. As Wilson shows, Pettigrew not only wrote a splendid travelogue; he seized the opportunity to reflect, more deeply than most men were capable of doing, on the strengths and weaknesses of Southern civilization in relation to the diver-

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gent tendencies of various European peoples. Reading that book, we may only lament that Pettigrew did not live to write his projected history of the Moors in Spain for which he, a talented linguist, had prepared himself by adding Arabic and Hebrew to his knowledge of French, German, Italian, and Spanish, as well as Greek and Latin. In the end, Wilson's account of *Spain and the Spaniards* provides, as does the book itself, a picture of a man and a Southern people who saw themselves as the heirs of a great Western Christian civilization, and yet who found themselves in opposition to the "progressive," secular, industrializing, and philosophically and politically radical turn it was taking.

On one issue I must part company with Wilson. I refer to a big quarrel not only with him but with an outstanding coterie of Southern conservative interpreters of the Old South—with Allen Tate, Richard Weaver, and M.E. Bradford, to name only some of the most illustrious. Wilson is here defending the Southern Tradition in politics and social theory: its critique of egalitarianism and radical democracy; its defense of family-based social order; its commitment to a classical republican polity. His account of Pettigrew's biting criticism of industrial capitalism and devotion to Southern—and southern European—traditionalism makes especially thought-provoking reading.

But Wilson, like his fellow Southern conservatives, pays dearly for his philosophical idealism. Hostile to slavery and racism, he seeks to root the positive qualities he finds in the life of the Old South in an older Christian civilization and trans-Atlantic republicanism. Too good a historian to treat slavery as a *bagatelle*, he nonetheless underestimates its effect on the formation of Southern culture, ideals, and character.

Lurking beneath the surface is an interpretation that stresses the yeomanry and that thereby implicitly treats the slaveholders as, as it were, wealthy and privileged extensions of yeomen and as men for whom slaveholding proved a disagreeable necessity. This will not do. Europeans spread the kind of Christian culture and conservative values that Wilson champions to all parts of North America, but they sank deep

roots only in the South and at the very moment when they were, on Wilson's own showing, striking bedrock in the North. How, then, could we explain the dogged resistance to the kind of modernity that the trans-Atlantic bourgeoisie was vigorously promoting if we discount the organic, rather than the cash-nexus, basis of Southern social relations? I do not believe that we

could, and, if I read Pettigrew and his compeers correctly, they did not, either.

This is a big subject for another day, properly pursued in a full discussion of what is living and what is dead in the Southern Tradition. For the moment, however disconcerting Wilson's questionable judgment on this matter, it detracts little from an admirable book.



BRIEF MENTIONS

WOMEN AND LAW IN CLASSICAL GREECE by Raphael Sealey
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 202 pp., \$24.95 (cloth), \$10.95 (paper)

"Feminist indignation is out of place in the study of ancient Greece," comments Raphael Sealey at the end of an appendix to his very sensible book. Rather than give way to his own indignation, Sealey, professor of history at Berkeley, has wisely chosen to omit from his bibliography nearly the whole of recent feminist scholarship. Avoiding polemics, he has concentrated on the legal position of women in ancient Greece. By comparing what is known of Athens, Gortyn, Sparta, and a sampling of Hellenistic law codes, Sealey concludes that underlying the variety of legal terms and customs was a set of common assumptions.

Specifically, a Greek woman was subject to the power of a *kurios*, a master, usually her father or, if he were dead, her nearest male relative. Upon marriage, she was given with her dowry to her husband, who became her master; the dowry, however, while passing out of her control, remained in an important sense hers and, if the marriage were dissolved, went with the wife. Greek law was also particularly concerned with two other questions concerning women: first, what to do about an heiress, i.e., an unmarried woman without father or brothers; and second, what to do in cases of intestate succession, that is, when a man dies without leaving descendants. Both were concerned primarily with preserving the integrity and existence of a family from which both men and women drew their identity.

These are thorny subjects that cannot be easily explained even to scholars, if they lack the requisite background. Sealey has done, however, a superb job of clarifying these issues, and anyone interested in questions of family history will benefit from a close reading of his book. His discussions of Athenian law and the laws of Gortyn are particularly illuminating. He is less successful in discussing Homer—his chapter reads like an outline of 20th-century Homeric scholarship—the Roman parallels, where he does not avail himself of the abundant evidence on Roman social life, and in his treatment of Aristotle.

More than once Sealey claims that "Aristotle thought that women were children who never grew up." He deduces this from a famous passage in the *Politics*, where the philosopher distinguishes among types of rule: of a free man over a slave, of a husband over a wife, and of a father over his children. Slaves, in his view, are too irrational to be independent, while children are only potentially rational. Women, on the other hand, obviously possess reason but not in a decisive form, that is, they are like Euripides' Phaedra, who knew what was right but surrendered to passion. But weakness is not identical with immaturity, and it is important to note that Aristotle said that while a man ruled as a king over his children, a husband's regime was constitutional. It is something like the difference between absolutism and representative government—a key distinction for any interpretation of Aristotle's view of sex roles.

As Sealey elsewhere observes, Athens tended to be less doctrinaire in its patriarchy than Republican Rome, and Aristotle continues to be the best source for our understanding of Greek political life as well as the best guide for improving our own. Despite these shortcomings, *Women and Law* is one of the best contributions made to women's studies and is sure to outrage the "women's caucus" of the American Philological Association.

—Thomas Fleming

A Niagara of Print

by Theodore Pappas

"It used to be one of our proudest boasts that we welcomed the downtrodden, the oppressed, the poverty-stricken, the fit and the unfit to a land of freedom, of plenty, of boundless opportunity. Our hindsight tells us that this boast was fatuous."

—George Horace Lorimer

Creating America: George Horace Lorimer and the *Saturday Evening Post*
by Jan Cohn
Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press; 326 pp., \$24.95

Believe it or not, *Chronicles* was not the first magazine in American history to question the virtue of unrestricted immigration. During the heady days of the early 1920's, while F. Scott Fitzgerald was recording the "the greatest, gaudiest spree in history," the *Saturday Evening Post* sought to concentrate serious attention on the social, political, and cultural consequences of welcoming everyone and anyone into this country. "We've got to hammer at immigration until Washington and the country at large wake up to what's happening," it declared in 1920. The *Post* even went so far as to encourage posterity to mark and hail the sailing of a little-known ship, the *Buford*. "Two ships, the *Mayflower* and the *Buford*, mark epochs in the history of America," announced the *Post*. "The *Mayflower* brought the first builders to this country; the *Buford* [which carried America's first lot of deported aliens in December 1919] has taken away the first destroyers."

No national publication fought more passionately for immigration reform, and the astonishing success of the *Post*'s crusade is the best evidence of the extraordinary influence that this magazine exerted during its prime. According to W.W. Husband, commissioner-general of immigration in the 1920's, the passage of the restrictive Immigration Act of 1924—America's first permanent quota law, which set the stage for the national origins plan of 1929—was directly

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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

attributable to the influence of George Horace Lorimer's *Saturday Evening Post*.

Jan Cohn, dean of the faculty and a professor of English at Trinity College, has written a superb account of Lorimer's nearly forty-year reign as editor of the *Post*. This book is not biography; the author only discusses Lorimer's public life as editor and allots a scant two paragraphs to his parentage (his father was a famous Baptist minister), upbringing (in Chicago and Boston), and years as an unsuccessful businessman before becoming editor of the *Post* at the age of 31. Nor is it corporate or institutional history; the *Post* is analyzed only in relation to Lorimer's editorship, and only tangentially does Cohn attempt to elucidate the larger

role that magazines such as the *Post*, *McClure's*, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *World's Work* played in signaling the demise of the "gentle reader" of the Victorian Age and the commencement of the age of news and information. This book is, however, an intriguing hybrid of the two forms, for during the years of Lorimer's editorship, 1899 through 1936, the shadow of the *Post* was exclusively that of its editor. Lorimer dominated every aspect of the magazine, and the magazine in turn dominated Lorimer's life.

When Lorimer became editor the *Post* was a small, struggling, non-descript publication that had just recently been saved from bankruptcy by *Ladies' Home Journal* publisher Cyrus H.K. Curtis. Curtis is often remembered as one of the early masters of magazine marketing, and his ingenious use of a highly tenuous tie between the *Post* and Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*—suddenly changing the magazine's founding year from 1821 to 1728, making Franklin the "founding editor" of the *Saturday Evening Post*—was indeed a coup worthy of Barnum. But Curtis's true genius lay in matching editor to format, and his hiring of Lorimer for the *Post* quickly paid dividends. Lorimer made two policy changes that revolutionized the magazine industry and placed the *Post* in the literary limelight: he promised to take no longer than 72 hours to decide a manuscript's fate, and to pay for manuscripts immediately upon acceptance. With policies such as these, and with a determined demeanor and a power to persuade, Lorimer needed no more than a year to transform the *Post* from a publisher of unknown authors and undistinguished fiction to a publication that ran articles by Grover Cleveland, Albert Beveridge, and William Jennings Bryan, and stories by Bret Harte, Hamlin Garland, and Joel Chandler Harris.

The *Post's* weekly circulation reached one million in 1908 and climbed to nearly three million in the late 1920's, when the average number of pages in a single issue burgeoned to two hundred. (The *Post's* readership, as Cohn rightly adds, was probably three to four times larger than the number of sold copies. In the age before radio, and particularly during the Depression, it is probable that a single issue was read by three or four other family members or friends.) Most telling are figures such as Lorimer's 1929 salary, a modest \$225,000, and the \$6,000 and \$60,000 rates that the *Post* paid respectively for short stories and serials in the late 1920's. As the most successful American magazine editor of his time, Lorimer seemed to publish everyone who was anyone or who was bound to become anyone. He published the journalism of the popular Sam Blythe, Garret Garrett, and Irvin S. Cobb; the illustrations of J.C. Leyendecker, Charles Livingston Bull, and (of course) Norman Rockwell; articles by Trotsky, Churchill, Mussolini, and virtually every American President and presidential candidate between Grover Cleveland and FDR; and fiction by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edith Wharton, Booth Tarkington, O. Henry, Pearl Buck, James Gould Cozzens, and William Faulkner. Readers of the *Post* read Frank Norris's *The Pit* and Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, Alfred Smith's memoirs and Mussolini's autobiography, and followed the adventures of G.K. Chesterton's Father Brown, J.P. Marquand's Mr. Moto, Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe, and Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot.

Before movies, radio, and television challenged the hegemony of the printed page, the *Saturday Evening Post* reigned supreme as America's most popular chronicler of early 20th-century culture. "No single contemporary medium has anything like so powerful, because essentially unchallenged, a hold on mass society," writes Cohn.

Lorimer achieved celebrity status in his lifetime, and he was frequently the subject of articles and interviews in the 1920's. Most of these "personality profiles" were mere hagiographical puff pieces that paid homage to Lorimer's genius while offering little if any analysis

of his motives or methods. Leon Whipple's 1928 article in *Outlook*, however, was different. Entitled the "SatEvePost: Mirror of These States," Whipple posed the following: what does this "Niagara of Print," as he described the *Post*, do to us? "What channels is it wearing in our society?" His conclusion was astute: that the *Post* was not merely a medium for entertainment and the dissemination of information, but rather was a "mirror" that "not only reflects us" but also "creates us."

Cohn picks up where Whipple left off and assigns responsibility for this Promethean mission to George Lorimer. The *Post*, she contends, was the instrument Lorimer used to shape American society around a particular set of values and to "interpret America to itself."

Lorimer was conscious from the outset of his editorial work that America was unformed as a nation; he saw the country as an unassimilated collection of regions and nationalities in which an overriding and unifying consciousness of Americanism had yet to be developed. The *Post* was conceived . . . as the medium of an American consciousness.

This new consciousness, as conceived and propagated by Lorimer, was to be based on the bourgeois culture of the 19th century. Born into Victorian America and inculcated with its mores, Lorimer would forever judge events by the degree to which they reflected the classical liberal ideals of diligence, thrift, simplicity, sobriety, self-reliance, and personal liberty. He never gave up hope that these 19th-century values could be molded to 20th-century opportunities and translated into a mass consciousness through the art, articles, and editorials of the *Post*. Lorimer and the *Post* became for rural, small-town, middle-class America what Henry Luce and *Life* became for the emerging suburban culture of the 1950's: the editor became its spokesman, and the magazine its cultural voice.

Lorimer wasted no time in molding the *Post* to his purposes. The values he wished to inculcate in his readers were perhaps nowhere better laid out than in his didactic "Letters from a Self-Made

Merchant to His Son," which appeared anonymously and serially in the *Post* between 1901 and 1902. The fictional self-made man was an old pork-packer named John Graham, and his son, Pierrepont, was a freshman at Harvard. The letters trace the son's follies through college that give rise to his father's homespun opinions and advice, and they set clearly in opposition two sets of social values: one that increasingly cherished titles and social station over diligence and true accomplishment, and another that coveted honesty, simplicity, and common sense. "It's good business, when a fellow hasn't much behind his forehead, to throw out his chest and attract attention to his shirt-front," writes Graham. "But as you begin to meet men who have done something that makes them worth meeting you will find that there are no 'keep off the grass' or 'beware of the dog' signs around their premises, and that they don't motion to the orchestra to play slow music while they talk." Lorimer's letters were an instant success, and they were published as a book in 1902. *Letters of a Self-Made Merchant* became a best-seller both here and abroad, and it was translated into more languages than any other American novel since *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Not surprisingly, the America that Lorimer and the *Post* portrayed was not to everyone's liking. Sinclair Lewis was perhaps the *Post's* most vocal nemesis in the 1920's. His claim that the merrily ignorant Babbitt gained all his wisdom from the *Post*, which for Lewis stood as the apotheosis of the middle and middle-class America he sought to ridicule and mock, naturally outraged Lorimer, and the latter answered Lewis in the December 1924 *Bookman*. Lorimer conceded that *Babbitt* might exemplify one kind of American businessman, but added "there are quite as many Babbitts among the critics, the writers, the lawyers, and the professors as there are among the Rotarians." Lorimer, however, would have the last laugh. In 1931, the year after he received the Nobel Prize for Literature, Sinclair Lewis was published in the *Post*.

Cohn makes it clear that Lorimer sought not only to proselytize and to declaim, but also to preserve and to

defend. And it is in those instances in which Lorimer saw his mission specifically as one of "saving" America from an enemy—particularly when the enemy took the form of national policies and politics that threatened Americans' personal liberty—that his character and convictions can best be seen. The foremost example of this was Lorimer's opposition to FDR and the New Deal.

Lorimer had gone to war on other issues on many previous occasions. Like William Jennings Bryan and Sergeant Alvin York, Lorimer had been among the group of Americans who staunchly opposed America's involvement in World War I, but who threw aside their ideological differences once war had been declared and patriotically supported their country's fight abroad. Lorimer had also fought passionately and successfully for immigration reform in the 1920's. But the new foe of the 1930's was to Lorimer a foe of uncalculable danger. Lorimer saw in FDR and the New Deal a subversion of everything that was good about Americans and American culture, and he unleashed upon Roosevelt the full force of his rage

and rhetoric.

Lorimer did, however, give Roosevelt a chance. During the honeymoon period afforded all newly elected Presidents, he urged the depressed country to stand behind Roosevelt. "Republicans and Democrats must back up the new Administration, but it, in turn, must back up America." He steered the *Post* along a nonpartisan course in the months following the 1932 election, publishing articles with such titles as "Pull Together," and stressing how "absolutely essential" it was that "the people should give their support and confidence to President Roosevelt." But Lorimer could not stay this course for long, and the December 9, 1933, issue of the *Post* signaled an end to the truce if not an open declaration of war on Roosevelt. The "Brain Trust" received the *Post*'s first volley. Nothing rankled Lorimer more than the radical-professor-turned-policymaker, and he urged the public to stay vigilant as to the true mission of these "best and the brightest": "No thoughtful man can escape the conclusion that many of the brain trust's ideas and plans are based on Russian ideology; that we are steadily being herded to the left; and that fundamental American ideas are in danger of being scrapped."

During the next three years Lorimer tried to keep the country's morale high with uplifting fiction and celebrity profiles, but he continued relentlessly in his editorials to hammer at what he saw as the administration's abuses: economically, its policies had fueled monetary devaluation; politically, it had waged war on the Constitution, subverted the civil service, and reinstituted the spoils system; and morally and culturally, the New Deal's socialist agenda—of a leviathan state promising subsistence without work and security without self-sacrifice—had undermined if not eradicated what was best in the American character. To the ubiquitous cry "Is everybody happy?" Lorimer sourly replied: "No . . . not those who hold fast to old-fashioned, commonsense ideas of thrift, economy, good faith and personal liberty."

Cohn contends that Roosevelt's landslide victory in the 1936 election dismayed Lorimer but did not lead to his decision to resign as editor. He had been diagnosed as having cancer, and his failing health is what prompted his

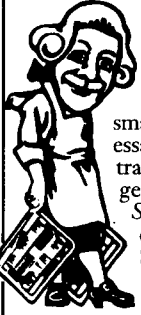
resignation on January 1, 1937. He died ten months later.

The December 26, 1936, issue of the *Post* was the last one edited by Lorimer, and his editorial, "Looking Forward," the only editorial he ever signed, was an unsentimental farewell. He made it clear to his readers that, for good or ill, and for nearly four decades, the magazine had been the voice of George Lorimer. "Up to the hour when this number of *The Saturday Evening Post* goes to press, I have formulated its policies, planned the numbers, and personally read and selected the material for them." And he took this opportunity to summarize one final time his and the magazine's editorial position. The *Post* had always encouraged and supported reasonable change, but never "cure-alls," and never "change for the sake of change."

If it is true, as Cohn concludes, that the 20th century had outgrown Lorimer's 19th-century rhetoric, that his conception of "nineteenth-century bourgeois America had by the mid-1930s become increasingly distant from social reality," it is also true that Lorimer had correctly assessed America's social and cultural state. He correctly foresaw the social, moral, and cultural implications of a welfare economy, and he correctly traced the American leviathan to the Roosevelt administration. We must "render unto Roosevelt the things that are Roosevelt's," Lorimer concluded in a bitter turn of phrase. He also correctly discerned the modern American's infatuation with "rights." In a statement that embodies as much wisdom today as it did when he wrote it in 1936, Lorimer said: "I marvel whence mankind derives all these newly proclaimed rights. He came into being without a stitch to his back or right of any kind. What rights he now enjoys are such because [they are] embodied in laws and codes." And he perceptively drew attention to one of the least attractive aspects of modern American culture: the intolerance of frank and free discussion. In a 1933 response to FDR's attacks on the loyalty of those who criticized his policies, he wrote: "We are in danger of making it a crime to disagree with those who hold ideas and beliefs contrary to our own." Prescience, Cohn might have added, was one of Lorimer's virtues. ◇

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Engines of Decline

by Allan C. Carlson

Disturbing the Nest: Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies

by David Poponoe

Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter;
390 pp., \$49.95 (hardcover),
\$24.95 (paper)

Disturbing the Nest is among the finest and most readable works of comparative sociology published in the last ten years, and the most effective critique of the Swedish welfare state now in print. David Poponoe's careful, fully documented, and gently devastating portrait of modern Sweden surprises the reader, in part, because Poponoe is himself a social democrat and an admirer of the dream that motivated the "middle way" visionaries of the 1930's. He is also a prominent scholar, currently at Rutgers University, and author of the popular college text *Sociology*.

The book succeeds because Poponoe is an honest man. He readily acknowledges the biases found in his discipline, and labors to overcome them. He notes that most of his colleagues refuse to acknowledge the modern phenomenon of "family decline" because they actually favor the passing of paternal authority, and the victory of women's liberation, economic egalitarianism, and sexual permissiveness: the very engines of decline. The discipline of sociology, he adds, "consists mainly of secularists. . . . It is no secret either that most sociologists today are politically left-wing on most social questions."

Poponoe crafts a theory of "family decline" that rests on the historical movement of Western peoples from the "nuclear family-kinship system," rooted in tradition, toward a "post nuclear-family system." This new order is marked by the disappearance of the extended kin group; a vastly curtailed role for the nuclear family, with the job of childrearing assumed by the state; radical individualism; the disappearance of marriage as a legal and

social form; and a sexual ethic resting on random liaisons.

The architects of Sweden's welfare state, he argues, sought to rescue the family from the negative side of modernity by transferring to government much of the risk associated with children. Yet Poponoe's analysis shows how the new system proceeded to disrupt the very bonds of mutual obligation it claimed to serve. The pursuit of gender equality as "family policy" cut the heart out of family life, as affirmative action programs and tax reform corrupted the economic gains enjoyed in marriage. Ironically, the Swedes thereby sacrificed the natural socialism found in the family (the one place where the socialist slogan, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" actually works) in favor of a feminist-guided individualism, a revolution now almost complete. Even consumption, Poponoe notes, has been individualized in Sweden: the man in a household keeps and spends his money, and the woman keeps and spends hers, with limited sharing of goods, while the children enjoy various state services and allowances for their support. Gone is the family as a meaningful institutional buffer between individual and state.

Family decline in Sweden spawned other results undreamed of by the social architects. Poponoe notes that few Swedes any longer care for each other, in sickness or in health. Some call their system a "client society," where "citizens are for the most part clients of a large group of public employees who take care of them throughout their lives." Voluntary service of any kind has almost vanished, leading Poponoe to conclude that "volunteerism and familism go together, the one being an extension of the unpaid and informal care giving that marks the other."

Poponoe concludes that "the very existence of the welfare state compromises the institution of the family." He then compares results in Sweden with family life in Switzerland, New Zealand, and the United States, and shows how different policy choices produced different results. The Swiss, for example, have few meddling bureaucrats, a

strong commitment to local government, and greater attachment to patriarchy and traditional gender roles (when the Swedes sent their wives to work in the 1960's to meet a labor shortage, the Swiss imported more "guest workers"). In New Zealand and the United States, a church-centered life and a turn to suburbs composed of single-family homes resulted, for a time, in strengthened traditionalism. Yet Poponoe concludes that these nations, too, are on the Swedish path, and that the "pathologies of modernization" will drive them to a similar fate.

With all that it does well, *Disturbing the Nest* has its flaws. One is the author's vague determinism, the sense that the spread of the "post nuclear-family system" is inevitable. He posits events that might turn the situation around (e.g., religious revival), but without much conviction. Running through the volume is the sense that modern peoples are flotsam, caught in historical currents beyond their control.

Poponoe also lets the architects of the Swedish system off too easily. He argues that "whatever has happened to the family as a result of welfare-state activities. . . seems largely an undesired and unintended consequence . . . and not an intended outcome." In fact, from the early 1930's on, key activist Alva Myrdal pressed consistently for a "family policy" that gave first priority to feminist leveling, then to the socialization of childrearing and the destruction of the home economy. While her husband, Gunnar, had some misgivings about what their generation had wrought, Alva always seemed pleased with modern, post-family Sweden.

Finally, Poponoe cannot shake free of a lingering attachment to statism, as when he writes that "the path to stronger families ironically may involve increasing rather than decreasing the intervention of the state." This statement resembles the "if we try harder, next time we'll get it right" school of thought found, until recently, among the Marxists; it also runs against the analysis found on the book's other 389 pages. But perhaps it serves as an intellectual fig leaf, the necessary cover for an

honest scholar resident on one of those socialist (and hardly democratic) enclaves otherwise known as an American university.

Allan C. Carlson is president of The Rockford Institute and author of *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics: The Myrdals and the Interwar Population Crisis* (Transaction).

Pacific Rimshot

by Gregory McNamee

Vineland

by Thomas Pynchon

Boston: Little, Brown and Company;
383 pp., \$19.95

Thomas Pynchon has been living out of the public eye for almost four decades now, a literary hermit who has succeeded by his very reclusiveness in attracting more attention than his less retiring colleagues. Seventeen years ago, his novel *Gravity's Rainbow* elevated Pynchon to cult-hero status, and ever since his acolytes have eagerly awaited a new blockbuster from their master. His new novel, *Vineland*, isn't quite it, but it offers an appropriately millenarian opening chord for the literature of the 1990's.

Vineland, the name the Vikings gave their version of North America a thousand years ago, is Pynchon's new world: the forested coast of northern California, where a generation of refugees from the 60's have settled to grow marijuana, live free or at least untroubled by reality, and die. One of them, protagonist Zoyd Wheeler, is the hippie Everyman, a drug-hazed veteran of the Free Speech Movement and the Haight, who lives from one federal disability check to the next, the only requirement for such support being that he commit one "publicly crazy" act each year, in full view of the dispossessed lumberjacks, hermits, punks, dopers, narcs, and yuppies who inhabit Zoyd's once-isolated world.

As the novel opens, Zoyd learns that his subsidy is being cut, for this is 1984 and Reaganomics is in full tilt. To add insult to fiscal injury, Zoyd's teenaged daughter Prairie has just announced

her intention of moving in with her bemohawked boyfriend, a singer in a thrash-and-smash rock band and author of the feminist anthem, "I'm just a Floozie with an Uzi." Bent on finding herself, Prairie (in *Vineland* only the house pets have normal names) is just as intent on learning about her ethereal mother's past, for of his ex-wife, Frenesi, Zoyd has remarked only that during their time together he "felt like Mildred Pierce's husband." Prairie's latter-day "Telemachia" occupies much of the interior of Pynchon's novel, and the journey is a parody of a long, strange trip any Woodstock child would recognize, replete with Vietnam veterans with such names as Blood and Vato, with the infantile society of the 1980's and its wacked-out denizens.

Frenesi, Prairie learns, had long been an unwilling informant for the FBI during the antiwar years, controlled by one Brock Vond, now the district commissar for the Drug Enforcement Agency and resident nemesis of the local dopers. Like Zoyd, Frenesi has drifted through two decades without a mooring cable, flitting from one pop fad, one designer drug, to another; only when Prairie reaches toward her does she begin to assume something of the humanity that abandoned the wild shores of *Vineland* years before. But Frenesi's transformation is too little too late, as *Vineland* rockets along to its nicely twisted ending: a far more neatly arranged close than that of *Gravity's Rainbow*, which literally (and literarily) disintegrated. Readers who reach the end of *Vineland*, having exerted the effort that Pynchon requires, will be surprised only by the ultimate conventionality of the story that led them there.

One of Pynchon's better conceits in his dystopian novel is the "thanatoid syndrome," whose willing victims exist in a state "like death but not quite dead." These Thanatoids, who inhabit the greater mass of America, make inroads into *Vineland* throughout the book, glued to the television, abhorring radical, liberal, conservative, any independent thought and all who engage in it, sating themselves on Rabelaisian TV-dinner banquets and their narcoleptic denouements.

Vineland is minor Pynchon. Certainly it does not approach the jittery japery of *Gravity's Rainbow* or the

mysteries of *V*, his first novel; in many ways, thematic and rhetorical, it resembles his quickie fable *The Crying of Lot 49*. But it is of a piece with all those books, extending a vision now grim, now comic, always parodistic, careening from style to style, wearing its influences proudly, never concerned with what the neighbors will think. It is minor Pynchon, but *Vineland* is well worth the attention of readers.

Gregory McNamee is the author of *The Return of Richard Nixon* (*Harbinger House*), a collection of essays.

A Musical Colossus

by J.O. Tate

Conversations with Von Karajan

by Richard Osborne

New York: Harper & Row;
157 pp., \$22.50

Herbert von Karajan's sixty years of conducting have left their mark not only in the memories of generations of concertgoers, but in the holdings of record collectors all over the world. In addition to being the "General Music-Director of Europe," Karajan is by far the best-selling serious musician who has ever recorded. Now that his extensive series of CD videos is being released, he has captured a new technology and managed to immortalize his visual image with his sound image, just as he had planned to do. Perhaps he should also have left us a hologram, as Sir Laurence Olivier did.

Karajan has gone further in reifying music, in dissolving his person into corporate entities, and in managing his career and life as a textbook example of public relations, than any other musician has ever done. He never explained satisfactorily just why the cash nexus, the glossy photos, the deluxe packaging, and the contrived mysteries were all necessary to share the joy of music with his public. Nor did he ever explain why he kept re-recording the same material, why he supplied so much "light music" (amiable trash, which he does better than anyone else), why he insisted on miscasting operatic roles so often, or why some of his work was cold, empty,

slick, and—worst of all—boring.

In his conversations with Karajan, Richard Osborne isn't about to upset the *apfelwagen* by pursuing any uncomfortable points. He adores the Master, and when you come to think about it, who can blame him? So much power, money, and control of musical shelf-space are united in the Karajan trademark; so much too of sheer talent, of shrewd patience, of unique sensitivity to music as sound rather than discourse. Though it is not a revisionist study like Joseph Horowitz's *Understanding Toscanini*, Richard Osborne's book is significant and revealing, and may be read for pleasure and instruction.

For make no mistake about it, Herbert von Karajan's Wagnerian complacency was based on a rich background and a strong though individualistic sense of musicianship. He showed, as all great musicians do, an early talent and sense of vocation. He was imbued with a very Austrian sense of musical tradition, operatic performance, and Alpine yearnings. His combination of German romanticism and Buddhist detachment was anticipated by Schoenhauer—and Wagner.



Osborne spends considerable space on Karajan's Nazi affiliations, claiming that his Party membership began *as late* as 1935 and was resigned in 1942, ten days after Karajan married his "partly Jewish" first wife. Though Osborne believes that Karajan suffered for his Nazi association, he seems to imply that the conductor suffered too for his Nazi dissociation, which rather evens the moral balance, or cancels it, or something.

Once on track, Karajan moved fast. By 1955, Furtwängler was dead, Toscanini was dying, and Karajan demanded and received lifetime leadership of the Berlin Philharmoniker. He had begun recording his best work—renditions of Bruckner, Strauss, Sibelius, and Italian opera, which music lovers still celebrate.

Richard Osborne's colloquies with Karajan are directed by the interview-

er's knowledge—he knows what to ask. The conductor's skill with Donizetti and Verdi, for instance, is attributed to powerful influences:

When Toscanini brought *Lucia di Lammermoor* to Vienna with the La Scala company, it was a revelation. I realized then that no music is vulgar unless the performance makes it so. . . . My training in Verdi's *Falstaff* came from Toscanini. There wasn't a rehearsal in either Vienna or Salzburg at which I wasn't present. I think I heard about thirty. From Toscanini I learnt the phrasing, and the words—always with *Italian* singers, which was unheard of in Germany then. I don't think I ever opened the score. It was so in my ears, I just knew it.

There can be no question that Karajan deserves great respect as a *chef d'orchestre*—his mastery was so deep that he talked in terms of breathing, heart rate, pulse, and yoga, in terms of energy, repose, and inner calm:

Many younger conductors are more exhausted after a concert than I am now. Nowadays *Tristan und Isolde* would not especially exhaust me. But the first time I conducted it I needed an ambulance to take me home!

I think that Karajan will be remembered for his best recordings, such as the pirated 1955 Berlin *Lucia* with Maria Callas, rather than for such wax fruit as his last recording, an *Un ballo in maschera* to be shunned. But even at the end, Herbert von Karajan was capable of such stunning work as his third recording of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony. That performance was taken on the road—I was one of those fortunate enough to hear the Wiener Philharmoniker play it in Carnegie Hall in February 1989. The critics raved and referred to that performance for a year as a benchmark, as they hadn't done since Karajan crushed his opposition with a dream of Mahler's Ninth Symphony some years before.

The Bruckner Eighth was incomparably the greatest live orchestral performance I have ever heard. The sight of Karajan struggling to walk, and then

relaxing on the rostrum, was a demonstration of the passion that sometimes seemed a megalomania. So too does Richard Osborne's *Conversations* articulate the context of Karajan's self-absorption. Though uncritical, this book furnishes authentic insights into the life and career of a musical colossus.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Anglo-Americana by Florence King

Blood, Class, and Nostalgia:
Anglo-American Ironies
by Christopher Hitchens

New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux;
398 pp., \$22.95

In 1858, as British and French forces pushed their way to Peking in the Opium Wars, Josiah Tatnall, commander of the neutral American naval squadron, intervened to save the British ships from Chinese guns and tow them safely out of range. When asked why he had abandoned his government's official neutrality, Tatnall replied: "Blood is thicker than water."

That is one of the many captivating and little-known anecdotes dredged up by native Briton Christopher Hitchens in this excellent and surprising book—surprising because the leftish Hitchens, columnist for *The Nation*, has either mellowed or else managed to stay in an excellent mood throughout the writing of it. Although his thesis is that America has been snookered by perfidious Albion, first into copying and defending its Empire and lately into taking the shards of it into receivership, Albion comes off as much less perfidious than one would expect, while the author's attitude toward America is one of sympathetic understanding and affectionate humor.

The phrase "special relationship" might make most Americans think of Israel on a word-association test, says Hitchens, but in actual fact it refers to a *fine romance* that supposedly broke up in 1776. "The 'special relationship' is the transmission belt by which British conservative ideas have been passed

into the American psyche," beginning at Valley Forge when Washington's troops were entertained by performances of Addison's *Cato* and heard lines such as "What pity is it that we can die but once to serve our country" that were later attributed to American patriots.

The transmission belt has been humming merrily ever since. Public figures, who know the extent of American ignorance and who dare not risk unfamiliar or too-intellectual allusions, readily quote Kipling, like Congressman Robert Dornan in Iran-Contra: "He is Ollie this and he is Ollie that. Get him out of here, the brute. But he is the savior of his country when the guns begin to shoot." To this mangled quatrain Congressman Mervyn Dymally promptly replied with an equally mangled quotation from Shakespeare: "To thine own self be true, and it must follow the night, the day thou canst be false to any man."

Unwitting conservators of the special relationship pull out all the stops when they get to Churchill, "the resort of choice for a politician who is on the ropes." Nixon's "Churchill said" rationalizations mounted as Watergate progressed, John Tower's supporters boasted of Churchill's diet of alcohol, and according to a computer survey that Hitchens serves up with infectious glee, one of every four columns by William Safire makes at least one reference to Churchill, while 1,200 allusions to him appeared in leading American newspapers between April and December 1984—"a period selected at random."

What Hitchens calls "Brit kitsch" is everywhere, but its worst manifestation stands in once-isolationist Middle America. The Country Club Plaza in Kansas City boasts a bronze statue of Winston and Clementine Churchill called "Married Love." Next to it is a speaker that plays the "blood, toil, tears and sweat" peroration at the press of a button.

Hitchens' best jabs are aimed at the kind of liberal intellectual snobs who never miss his column in *The Nation*. The special relationship rests in many respects on mutually sustaining elites in the two countries, he says, and so . . .

The *Masterpiece Theatre*
Sunday evening debauch of

Englishness is one of the standbys and continual referents for students of Anglophilia and its American mystique. When Alistair Cooke assumes the leather armchair, the free association begins and Englishness takes on its varied guises and incarnations: the civilized country house; the strained but decent colonial civil servant; the regimental mess; the back-to-the-wall wartime coolness under fire, the stratified but considerate social system. . . . As the cameras roam the room before discovering Mr. Cooke, they linger upon marble busts, oil paintings, carefully bound first editions, and sporting and military prints."

And then, at long last, the camera zooms in on "Mr. Cooke's perennially reassuring features."

The American Achilles heel that makes such seduction possible is our obsessive commitment to democracy. We are afraid to say the word "class" out loud, but the overpowering Englishness of Alistair Cooke & Company in our cultural life permits the permutation of class into "style." One enthusiastic laborer in the vineyards of permutation is James "Scotty" Reston, whom Hitchens calls "one of the all-time 'special relationship' apparatchiks." Others are Rhodes scholars (eleven in the Kennedy administration alone) who get a dinner jacket allowance and a charge account at an Oxford bookstore as part of their grants. But lest we forget, there are also the "skinheads," whose prole version of the special relationship is based, says Hitchens, on the behavior of English soccer fans.

High and low, we are all victims of an identity crisis that was articulated in a secret document of the British Security Coordination, an organ of Churchill and Sir William Stephenson designed to mold American opinion between 1939 and 1945. Although America is rich and powerful, said the analysts, the American people "are still unsure of themselves individually . . . still striving after national unity and indeed after some logical grounds for considering themselves a nation in the racial sense."

The special relationship in all its

forms—political, cultural, social, economic—was designed to benefit England while serving as our security blanket, and it has worked. Hitchens finds Waspness triumphant over the immigrant version of the American Dream even as late as the 1988 elections, when the successful "Mayflower imagery" of George Bush and his family triggered subconscious racial and religious connotations represented by the opposition: "Television advertisements featuring a notorious black criminal named Willie Horton also showed Michael Dukakis without a shave and looking distinctly swarthy."

Attempts to break off the special relationship have been short-lived and futile. Hitchens provides an entertaining description of the flurry of post-Revolution enthusiasm for making classical Greek or Hebrew the official language of the U.S. government—in itself a Waspy move since all the leaders had been classically educated after the British fashion. Noah Webster's campaign for a distinct grammar of American English and Theodore Roosevelt's executive order for "Simplified Spelling" in government prose ("thru" for "through") came to naught despite the cooperation of Anglophobes like Colonel Robert McCormick, owner of the *Chicago Tribune*. In 1923 an "American Language" bill was introduced in the House, but its tone of provincialism and frontier brag—"Let our writers drop their top-coats, spats and swagger sticks, and assume occasionally their buckskin, moccasins and tomahawks"—was ridiculed by critics like H.L. Mencken (who, ironically, was an Anglophobe).

Language also figured in Churchill's many wily schemes to save the British Empire by turning it into an Anglo-American consortium. To this end he proposed joint citizenship, currency, trading areas and bases, and "Basic English," the brainchild of an Oxford don to reduce the language to 850 necessary words that the whole world could learn in time to be ruled by the "English-speaking peoples." An unimpressed Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Churchill if he could have inspired his country with "blood, work, eye water and face water," and promptly turned the Basic English question over to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, a Tennessee mountaineer famed for his

colorful cussing, who shelved it. Basic English was never heard of again, but Hitchens believes it inspired George Orwell's "Newspeak."

Hitchens sees U.S. English as the latest example of Anglophilia, and one with clear designs on U.S. immigration policy. He traces the group back to the Pioneer Fund of 1937 to study applied genetics in Germany, and uncovers a private organization called WITAN, from the Anglo-Saxon "Witenagemot," or "conclave of wise men," which he hints is up to no good. This gets a bit darkling but it is still a far cry from full-throated Groucho Marxism. Hitchens has written a controlled and very witty book that often takes on the flavor of Gore Vidal and William F. Buckley. He might not consider that a compliment but it is meant as one.

Florence King's most recent book is Lump It or Leave It, reviewed in the August issue.

Alone as Children Ever Are

by James W. Tuttleton

Randall Jarrell: A Literary Life

by William H. Pritchard

New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux;
338 pp., \$25.00



In one of his most moving poems, "The Woman at the Washington Zoo," Randall Jarrell (1914-1965) presents a woman of no particular accomplishment who—feeling her life drab and colorless—looks at the caged animals, "these beings trapped / As I am trapped but not, themselves, the trap." Given the banality of her life, it is her foreknowledge of impending death that preoccupies the poet. The routine, the ordinary, the humdrum have become too much for her. She seeks deliverance, even at the price of some imagined violence. In the end, thinking about the vulture, tearing at "the white rat that the foxes left," she begs it to transfigure itself and step down to her "as man." And the poem concludes, "You know what I was, / You see what I am: change me, change me!"

This longing for change is Jarrell's

most emotionally intense, most highly charged theme. To transformation, to metamorphosis, even to transmogrification in its more grotesque forms Jarrell returned, again and again, in poem after poem. That in some profound way he was always dissatisfied with himself seems inescapable. And the shocking news, in October 1965, that this distinguished poet had been struck by an automobile on a dark highway in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, raised an ambiguous question as to whether it had been an accident or whether he had thrown himself in front of the speeding car. I shall return to this question in a moment, and to the sense of the event as given by William H. Pritchard in his new biography, *Randall Jarrell: A Literary Life*.

But first it is worth remembering that, as a poet, Randall Jarrell had the good luck to have gone to Vanderbilt and to have taught at Kenyon College during the first flowering of the Agrarian poets and critics and to have known closely John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Lowell, and Peter Taylor, among others. His education led him into a career of teaching, which was interrupted by World War II, in which he served as an airman. Afterward, with the publication of his impressive volumes *Blood for a Stranger* (1942), *Little Friend*, *Little Friend* (1945), *Losses* (1948), *The Seven-League Crutches* (1951), and *Selected Poems* (1955), he won several prizes for poetry, attained national recognition, won a Guggenheim Fellowship, and gained appointment to literary posts at the *Nation* and *Partisan Review*.

His novel *Pictures from an Institution* (1954) was a hilarious satire on progressive education as offered by a school like Sarah Lawrence, where he had taught in the late 1940's, before moving on to the Women's College of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Setting aside some scathing literary criticism—collected in *Poetry and the Age* (1953), *A Sad Heart at the Supermarket* (1962), and *The Third Book of Criticism* (1969)—as well as some children's books and anthologies, Jarrell is perhaps best remembered for the surprising power of a pair of late volumes of verse, *The Woman at the Washington Zoo*

(1960), which won the National Book Award, and *The Lost World* (1965).

I had the good luck to meet Randall Jarrell in Chapel Hill in 1961. Even before these final two volumes, however, it was apparent to me that Jarrell—a splendidly bearded yet trim, fit, and athletic figure—was transfixed by the sensibility of the child, whose primitive terrors he knew and understood so well. Many of his World War II poems had made him seem the best of the war poets, and his most well-known poem—"The Death of the Ball-Turret Gunner"—has been so frequently anthologized that it virtually stands for a whole generation's war verse. But it was Jarrell's vignettes of childhood—the oppression of the mother, the confusion about what adults thought and did in secret, the fear of getting lost, the rage to run away—these poems, always invoking the atmosphere of Grimm's fairy tales as seen through the Oedipal lens of Freud, that seemed his strongest or at least most characteristic. It was as if his sensibility lived in the world of Hänsel and Gretel; thus it came as no surprise to me, but it was in fact a discovery, to learn from Pritchard that Jarrell had Maurice Sendak do the illustrations for his children's books, which I had not seen. Oddly enough, Jarrell never had any children himself, though he appears to have been a splendid stepfather to the two daughters of his second wife, Mary von Schrader Jarrell (who edited his letters in 1985).

Toward the end of his life, in 1962, Jarrell's mother returned to him the letters he had written her during a childhood period he had spent in California with his grandparents. Out of these come the remarkable *ubi sunt* poems of *The Lost World*, where evil is first encountered in childhood and death most terrifyingly discovered. Mr. Pritchard is loath to agree with other critics that these poems slide into sentimentality, and he is fain to point out that, if Jarrell's poems are grim, his life and his correspondence were generally upbeat and genial. But I am inclined to think that these childhood letters, returned to him just as age came upon him most unexpectedly, must have triggered the depression and the suicide attempt that landed him in the hospital at Chapel Hill. At the time Jarrell went out onto the highway

where he was struck by the car, he was an outpatient at the hospital and undergoing therapy for the wrist he had slashed some months before. The passengers in the car said that Jarrell had "turned" or "lunged" toward it. Pritchard poses all of the possible questions about what might or might not have been on Jarrell's mind that dark night and responsibly concludes that we simply cannot know. Nor could the doctor conducting the autopsy, who ruled with the coroner that "it was an accidental death, 'reasonable doubt about its being a suicide' being present in their minds."

Somehow, accident or suicide, the event was not surprising to me, as if the poems said in their way that the man who composed them expected not to die in his bed at a great old age. Mary Jarrell has always insisted that it was an accident. Yet Randall's friends Peter and Eleanor Taylor and Robert Lowell felt that the death was a suicide. Certain it is that Jarrell knew what he had been, saw what he was. And he always knew—as the poem "The Märchen" makes clear—that disaster for Hänsel lay in not learning how "to change, to change."

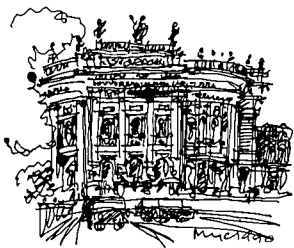
James W. Tuttleton is a professor of English at New York University.

Honest Words by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Coyote Waits
by Tony Hillerman
New York: Harper & Row;
304 pp., \$19.95

It may be an embarrassing admission for somebody who has been a book review editor for the last 14 and a half years, but the truth is I had never heard of Tony Hillerman until May 1989, when I began traveling in the Southwest in connection with a book-writing project I am working on and the wife of a friend of mine in Ignacio, New Mexico, asked casually if I had read any of Hillerman's books. These she described as detective novels set on and around the Navajo Indian Reservation, and since I had already spent time wandering on "the Res" (as it is known locally)

and planned to spend more time, I kept an eye open for Hillerman's work and bought a couple of paperback volumes when I came across them. In the subsequent 14 months I have read eight of his eleven novels for adults (a twelfth is for children) and am on the lookout for the other three. He has several more under contract, and when Harper & Row publishes them I am going to read those, too. This makes Tony Hillerman the third detective novelist, after Conan Doyle and Raymond Chandler, whom I have any interest in reading at all.



Yet Hillerman is no Chandler. "Intellectuals" ("innerleckshuls," Flannery O'Connor called them) love Chandler, but I doubt if they number very many of Hillerman's fans, though I may be mistaken in that. Tony Hillerman is not, even in the best sense of the term, a literary novelist. He is neither a poet nor a stylist. He is not a novelist of ideas, or of attitudes. He lacks that quality of "magic" that Chandler (quite modestly) recognized in his own work, as well as the "charm" Chandler found in F. Scott Fitzgerald's ("a kind of subdued magic, controlled and exquisite, the sort of thing you get from good string quartettes"). He exhibits, typically, a tin ear for human speech, and those of his characters (in particular his two mutually offsetting protagonists, Tribal Police Officer Jim Chee and Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn) who reappear from one book to the next do not really develop as human beings at all. His "plots" are not always satisfactory, being grounded often in unconvincing human motives—although they are nearly always better resolved than Raymond Chandler's. But: Hillerman is a compelling storyteller, skilled in the oldest and most fundamental of the arts, and as a storyteller he has the most basic kind of integrity. There is nothing either cheap or dishonest—*ever*—in Tony Hillerman's work. He never (deliberately)

fudges, and he does not pander at all; and while he has been accused of portraying Navajo culture and contemporary life in somewhat idealized terms, "the Res" is the indispensable omnipresent grounding of all his fiction as much as Southern California is of Chandler's, though not with the same poetic intensity.

Actually, *Coyote Waits* shows marked literary advancement in many respects over its predecessors (although my favorite Hillerman book to date is still *People of Darkness*, a clever, inventive, and lovely novel), a sign that its author is finding out his own weaknesses and working upon them. The dialogue, for one thing, is much more easy and natural in *Coyote* than in the earlier books, Hillerman having—almost—divested himself of irritating linguistic ticks. (Hillerman characters are inordinately fond of concluding their sentences with the phrase, recognizable by all Hillerman readers, "that sort of thing.") *Coyote Waits*, in fact, comes much closer to qualifying as a "literary novel"—I know, I know: supply your own definition—than anything he has previously written. Hillerman still needs to move his characters off their identifying stases (Leaphorn's love for his dead wife, Chee's love for the Navajo lawyer Janet Pete that is apparently as eternal and unavailing as if Pete and Chee were figures on a Grecian urn, the white trader McGinnis' patient alcoholism, and so on). But Hillerman may be learning now as fast as he writes, and he writes very fast. In addition to the 12 fiction titles are five nonfiction books to his credit, and Hillerman—a former newspaper editor—did not begin writing books full-time until he was into his 40's.

The action of *Coyote Waits* occurs, as it does in many of Hillerman's books, in the fall—apparently a season as special to Tony Hillerman as twilight was a special time for William Faulkner. It is a good season for the setting of a Western novel, and a Southwestern novel in particular. It is a season always of waiting, of anticipation, of sharpness in the air, and of mystery. And that is all that I am going to tell you now about the story *Coyote Waits*.

Chilton Williamson, Jr.'s latest book is The Homestead, a novel.

Escape from Grub Street

by Russell Kirk

Henry Fielding: A Life

by Martin C. Battestin with

Ruthe R. Battestin

London and New York: Routledge;
738 pp., \$45.00

Walter Scott, in 1820, wrote that Fielding is "father of the English Novel." Yet James Russell Lowell, in 1881, remarked to an English audience that "We really know almost as little of Fielding's life as of Shakespeare's." Lives of Fielding, or important essays about him, have been written by distinguished men of letters—Arthur Murphy, Walter Scott, James Russell Lowell, Austin Dobson, Leslie Stephen, Wilbur Cross, and others—but no thorough biography had existed before this big new book came from the press.

Professor Battestin and his wife have discovered a good many Fielding letters previously unknown, 41 political satires previously unattributed to him, and abundant materials in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers and various London archives. We still do not know everything about Fielding; but it seems probable that this Battestin *Life*, so carefully prepared, will remain the principal study of one of the most lively writers in the English language. Battestin published 15 years ago *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art*, a major study; he is the undisputed chief authority on Fielding's writings and his life.

It will not do to judge this book by the publicity hand-out sent to reviewers and booksellers by the publisher. This blurb instructs us that *Tom Jones* "shocked the delicate minded members of English society when it was first published in 1749. In fact many believed that the book, with its lusty hero, was responsible for the two earthquakes which rocked London shortly after its publication." This is rubbish. There were no London earthquakes (!); and as for shocking the English public at the middle of the 18th century, a sentence from Lowell will suffice here: "We must guard against falling into the anachronism of forgetting the coarseness of the age into which he [Fielding] was born, and whose atmos-

phere he breathed." Fielding and Smollett shocked nobody much.

Worse follows. The writer for Routledge's "book news" endeavors to make much of alleged possible incest. "There is also evidence to hint at possible unorthodox behavior with his sister Sarah, who in fact moved in with Fielding after the death of his first wife." How shocking, that a sister (also a novelist, incidentally) should keep house for her brother! Actually, Battestin touches only briefly on such conjectures, although he appears to have been tempted to turn psycho-biographer at two or three other points.

For antidote to such nasty speculations, one may turn to the pages of Sir Leslie Stephen, in 1899:

Fielding's critics and biographers have dwelt far too exclusively upon the uglier side of his Bohemian life. They have presented him as yielding to all the temptations which can mislead keen powers of enjoyment, when the purse is one day at the lowest ebb, and the next overflowing with the profits of some lucky hit at the theatre. . . . But it is essential to remember that the history of the Fielding of later years, of the Fielding to whom we owe the novels, is the record of a manful and persistent struggle to escape from the mire of Grub Street. . . . He was manly to the last, not in the sense in which man means animal; but with the manliness of one who struggles bravely to redeem early errors, and who knows the value of independence, purity, and domestic affection.

And it is thus, indeed, that Battestin perceives Fielding. This new life gives the quietus to diverse silly anecdotes and legends about Fielding—among them Horace Walpole's picturesque but malicious report that when justice of the peace for Westminster and Middlesex, Fielding was found dining at his house with "a blind man, a whore, and three Irishmen." In truth, the blind man was Sir John Fielding, Henry Fielding's half-brother and his successor as "court justice" in Westminster; and the alleged "whore" was the second Mrs. Henry

Fielding.

Part IV of this book, "Magistrate and reformer," I find particularly interesting. Fielding's campaign against robbers and thieves, which effort brought about the final ruin of his health, may remind readers of the streets of New York, Washington, or Detroit nowadays. Fielding succeeded in catching "a gang of twenty armed pickpockets," all of them Irish and all discharged sailors, who called themselves "The Royal Family"; and also in convicting "Terrible Nick" or "Nick the King of Glory" and his band.

The publisher's blurb calls Fielding a "public defender"—as if he had headed some 18th-century Legal Aid bureau. In truth, his vigorous putting down of riotous mobs became highly unpopular. Battestin makes this clear:

The century in which he lived was moving toward revolutions in both the Old and New Worlds that ushered in republican and democratic forms of government; but Fielding, like the vast majority of his contemporaries, distrusted such systems. He scorned 'the Mob'—'the fourth Estate,' as he called them sarcastically. He would have regarded those epoch-making events with horror, as cataclysms very like the triumph of Anarchy that Pope envisaged in the Dunciad. . . . Far from being the forward-looking prophet of libertarianism he sometimes is said to be, Fielding was profoundly conservative as a social thinker.

Tom Jones, said Edward Gibbon, "will outlast the palace of the Escorial, and the imperial eagle of the house of Austria." The Escorial was not tumbledown, when last I saw it, and the great family of Habsburg is vigorous still, though dethroned. Moreover, this reviewer adheres more to the Scott school of the novel than to the Fielding school. Nevertheless, *Tom Jones* will not fall into the obscurity that long ago overtook Fielding's plays; nor will Fielding the man be forgotten, rant though Deconstructionists may.

Russell Kirk writes from Mecosta, Michigan.

Letter From Cincinnati

by Janet Scott Barlow

Stranger in Paradise



When I moved to Cincinnati from Chicago in 1973, I found I could gauge the personality of my new city by listing the things I missed about the home I'd left. I missed the bulging Chicago newspapers. I missed being in a place where cynicism competes with humor as the prevailing public attitude and humor often wins. I missed the Cubs. I missed the presence of an irrepressibly vocal populace. (Spend ten minutes with a Chicago South Sider and you'll learn everything from his views on the state of the world to his mother's maiden name, and he'll throw in a recommendation on where to get a brake job on your car.) I missed politics as a contact sport and Mike Royko's big mouth. I missed Democrats.

I went along like that for about a year and a half, keeping my little list and indulging my grief, until it finally occurred to me that there's more than one version of paradise. I realized that political boredom can grow on you, especially when it's accompanied by civic order. I realized that one of the reasons my morning paper seemed skimpy was that it didn't contain endless stories of horrific crimes from the day before. I discovered that it's acceptable, even enjoyable, to root for a baseball team that can actually win, and rather soothing to reside in a town where the day's biggest news might be "Reds Sweep Road Trip." I found it could be relaxing not to *always* hear *everybody's* opinion about *everything*. I never stopped missing living in the same city with Mike Royko, bless his angry, funny heart, but I had one consolation: I no longer lived in the same city with Bob Greene. As for Democrats, I stopped missing them when I pretty much stopped being one.

Today, the biggest difference between me, the rooted transplant, and native Cincinnatians is that natives get

openly—if politely—defensive when the city is criticized, while I tend toward covert defensiveness. When New York acquaintances come to town on business (and a lot of business is done here) and say to me, sometimes good-humoredly, sometimes not, "What do you people *do* around here after 11 p.m.?" I tell them that we just try to avoid stepping in cowplop and getting overly excited at the bingo games—and hey, how about that Reds road trip?

But born-and-bred Cincinnatians are not given to leg-pulling, mixing it up, or playing tit for tat. When big-city Easterners complain that there is no place here to get a seven-course meal at 3 a.m., Cincinnatians don't say, "So what?" or "Who the hell wants to eat at 3 a.m.?" or "Right you are; so the next time you come to town, pack a snack." What they say is, "That's true, but . . ." Then they go on to mention the beloved Reds and the splendid Bengals (See? We're in the big time), the city ballet, the symphony, and the museums (See? We've got culture), the general quality of life, the *niceness* of living here. You want more? We've got a five-star French restaurant (it closes at eleven—sorry) and a *great* zoo.

So Cincinnatians are defensive, yes, but they're also earnest. The city is so earnest, in fact, that if it finds itself misunderstood too often or consistently, the whole place breaks out in mental hives, a kind of collective psychological rash.

Defensive and earnest. That's the phrase that ran through my mind during the course of our latest controversy, the one centering on the now beyond famous Robert Mapplethorpe photography exhibit. Our last municipal disturbance involved, you'll recall, Pete Rose and his banishment from baseball. Cincy took its lumps for its response to the Rose episode, deservedly in my opinion (too much defensiveness, not enough earnestness), and took its lumps again for community reaction to the Mapplethorpe show. But this time it was a bum rap. As briefly as possible, here is the program

of events. The sequence is important.

1) Amidst a nationwide debate over either "obscene" art or obscene "art," depending on who was doing the talking (I came to think of it as the war of the quotation marks), Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) makes plans to exhibit the Mapplethorpe retrospective.

2) Citizens for Community Values, a group whose members include local business executives, religious leaders, and various Cincinnati Bengals, objects to the exhibit's inclusion of seven photographs that are described by the arts group as "Mapplethorpe's most challenging works" and by the community values group as examples of obscenity. In the background, law enforcement officials, citing local obscenity statutes, begin making threatening noises.

3) The national media pick up on the controversy and cast the story more or less as "Hick Town Has Fit Over Art Pix."

4) The conflict, which has become an issue, now stimulates a public debate on the questions of censorship and free expression, the definitions of art and pornography, the purpose and limits of community standards. Through the vehicle of their local newspapers' op-ed pages, countless Cincinnatians participate in the debate by organizing their thoughts, expressing them coherently, and signing their names. The debate takes this form: it is genuinely searching; it is marked throughout, with few exceptions, by civility, sincerity, and restraint; it is undergirded by the assumption that decent people can disagree and is therefore almost completely free of the suggestion by either side that those on the opposing side are, by virtue of their opinions, immoral, unpatriotic, subversive, or evil.

5) The exhibit opens, whereupon city and county officials treat Cincinnatians to the unsettling sight of uniformed policemen clearing out and closing down (for an hour) a crowded art gallery. Immediately, the CAC and its director are indicted on misdemeanor or obscenity charges by a Hamilton

County grand jury (charges that will still be unresolved when the exhibit closes on schedule seven weeks later).

6) The local debate, still restrained, intensifies; the national Hick Town stories increase; the *Washington Post* editorializes that what's going on in Cincinnati, while superficially "amusing," actually "isn't funny at all."

7) Neither the "police raid" on the arts center nor the indictment against it is universally applauded by Cincinnatians, a fact that prompts city and county officials to do their version of The Three Stooges Play Politics: You prosecute the case. No, *you* prosecute it.

8) Cincinnati breaks out in its everybody-thinks-we're-rubes rash (defensive), even as it continues to struggle with the issues before it (earnest). The media picks up on the defensiveness and ignores the earnestness. The Hick Town stories continue; the rash spreads. Even Mike Royko is heard from. The legal action against the CAC and its director has made "Cincinnati look like a big rube town, which I never thought it was," says Royko. "It's always struck me as being a medium-sized rube town." (For me, this is a let down. I expected better from Royko—which is to say, I expected worse.)

If your source of information on Mapplethorpe in Cincinnati was the national media, you saw reported or suggested just about everything on the above list, with the glaring exception of number four; the quality and character of the local debate, a debate that was not only an essential part of the story but a remarkable and heartening occurrence in itself, especially in a time when so much public discourse is an exercise in rancor and rhetorical excess. What's more, the media decided on their Hick Town slant before the hicks themselves had been heard from, and stayed with that slant even after the appearance of abundant evidence that might have challenged it. Why did they do that? One possibility is the constraints of daily journalism. So much news, so little time! Examining assumptions takes effort, therefore stereotypes have their uses. The only other possibility I can think of is that the national journalistic establishment actually believes that any city that would question the public display of sadomasochistic and homoerotic photographs is

by definition a hick town.

For their efforts in debating difficult, complex issues with a measure of dignity and good will, Cincinnatians saw themselves trashed on a national scale. The *New York Times* labeled Cincinnati "[possibly] the most sexually restrictive big city in the country." On its face that statement is false. Sex is not restricted in Cincinnati, no matter what the *New York Times* says; in fact, people have sex here all the time. What is restricted is the availability of peep shows, nudie bars, massage parlors, and X-rated movies. The *Times* also accused Cincinnati, in so many words, of hypocrisy for being located right across the river from Newport, Kentucky, which makes available to Cincinnatians the strip joints their own city forbids—the *Times'* point being that some Cincinnatians actually cross the river for that reason. (The article was a doubly cheap shot, in that Newport, its burlesque clubs notwithstanding, has made great efforts in recent years to rid its streets and its image of sleaze.)

Finally, the *New York Times* reported, more than once, that the Mapplethorpe show had traveled to cities from Hartford to Berkeley "without incident," while Cincinnati had "nearly gone into convulsions" over the exhibit. Please. This simply isn't a convulsion-prone city. The only event here that ever came close to being convulsive was Pete Rose's banishment from baseball, and, for better or for worse, the photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe, stranger in paradise, are no match for that. What the Mapplethorpe exhibit produced in Cincinnati was a community debate (and a good one), accompanied by a community rash.

The exhibit also prompted public demonstrations outside the CAC, the largest of which was estimated at one thousand by the *New York Times*, five hundred by the local papers. The demonstrations went like this. The anti-censorship forces, made up mostly of students, did what college kids (and those who want to act like college kids) sometimes are inclined to do: they pulled out the rhetorical stops by yelling "Fascists!" at the police and carrying signs with warnings about Hitler. The anti-pornography group did its own name-dropping in the form of

placards reading "God Is Against Pornography And So Are We." As public demonstrations go in this country, Cincinnati's were both typical in character and ho-hum in overall effect—hardly "convulsive."

Is it any wonder Cincinnatians are defensive? I can't think of another city in the country in which outside observers confuse the absence of sleaze with the absence of sex. This may be the only city in America that gets stigmatized for having *too little* commercial vice. Name one other city that is expected to answer not only for what it won't permit, but for what its neighboring cities will. Name one other city that's supposed to explain itself for being dissimilar in attitude to *Berkeley*. Before it was all over, I expected to see a *New York Times* headline announcing "Impossible to Get Seven Course Meal in Cincinnati at 3 a.m."

Since no one else bothered (and before I break out in a rash myself), it's worth taking a look at Cincinnati's debate over the Mapplethorpe exhibit and asking why that debate was so civilized. I can think of three reasons.

First, the concepts of "community standards" and "community values" aren't worth arguing about unless you actually have a community. And Cincinnati is a community. That is, the things Cincinnatians agree on are more binding than the things they disagree on are divisive. Thus there was during the Mapplethorpe controversy the awareness that even on emotional issues, *especially* on emotional issues, it is a matter of civic as well as intellectual responsibility to think twice before deciding that one's neighbors are "the enemy."

Second, local politicians pretty much kept silent. This was in part a reflection of the nature of the beast—most politicians don't risk voluntary plunges into sticky issues—and in part an example of the subdued character of Cincinnati politics. In any case, the silence was, in this instance, a help. With public opinion split and most city leaders lacking the nerve or the inclination to try exploiting the controversy for political gain, Cincinnatians had the issue pretty much to themselves, and their discussions were not limited to or by politics.

The published dialogue stimulated by the Mapplethorpe exhibit ran all

over the map. It touched on all the obvious questions and many that weren't so obvious. It included the opinion of a local pediatric specialist that it is dangerous to make children "the focus of sexual attention or interest," ("Not for a moment," he wrote, "not as entertainment; not as art"), and the opinion of others who said that any sexual interest in Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs of exposed children is in the mind of the beholder, not the photographer/artist. The debate included complaints about the hypocrisy of corporate executives whose self-promotional support for the arts suddenly becomes conditional on their personal artistic preferences, and complaints about the arrogance of an arts community that interprets as "financial blackmail" any limits to, or conditions on, corporate generosity. The view was expressed that if Robert Mapplethorpe had used animals or women instead of men as the subjects of his sadomasochistic pictures, some free expression advocates would instantly be on the other side, raising outraged questions about the limits of free expression. And that view was met with the argument that all such what-ifs are irrelevant diversions, entirely beside the point.

The debate gave each side the opportunity to ask its most important question, which happened to be the same question: where do we draw the line? Those opposed to closing the exhibit asked it this way: if we allow these pictures to be censored today, what will be censored tomorrow? Those in favor of closing the exhibit wanted to know: if we allow these pictures to be displayed as art today, what will be displayed as art tomorrow? Rounding things out were a few stubborn citizens who would not be distracted by future implications, insisting that the issue was *these* pictures in *this* community at *this* moment.

Some Cincinnatians were painfully ambivalent about the whole business, not wanting the obscene/challenging photographs shown; but not wanting them seized by the law either. And one or two found it very important that if an exhibit they disapproved of were shut down, they would be denied the opportunity to stay away of their own volition. (If you ban it, I can't boycott it—I loved that one.) And one fellow even took the time to state his right as an American and a Cincinnati to be

"apathetic" about the entire affair, apparently oblivious to the fact that apathetic people don't write letters to the editor.

The debate was, then, an exploration of ideas, values, responsibilities, and attitudes, one that did not get hopelessly tangled up in political rhetoric, in large part because it took place in a convenient, if cowardly, political leadership vacuum.

The third factor responsible for Cincinnati's civility in the midst of controversy was the city's intrinsic social conservatism. *Conservative* can be a rash-causing word in Cincinnati, and if you say it in a certain tone of voice, city spokesmen will start getting all blotchy, as they wave surveys of Hamilton County voting patterns (in the national mainstream) and explain the political makeup of the city council (pretty even-steven). So let's spare them that ordeal and define the term. *Conservative* in Cincinnati means: moderate, cautious, family-oriented, and tradition-bound. It does not mean: reactionary, bigoted, intolerant, or ignorant. So again: Cincinnati's intrinsic social conservatism was responsible for its civility in the face of controversy. Of course, Cincinnati's intrinsic social conservatism was also responsible for the controversy in the first place. But unless you believe that community conflict over the definition of art is in itself repressive or dangerous, the fact of the conflict will mean less than the character and content of the ensuing debate.

Which brings us back to out-of-towners, some of whom did indeed object to the very fact of Cincinnati's conflict over the definition of art. Prior to the Mapplethorpe opening, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* reported that Howard Read, director of photography for the Robert Miller Gallery in New York City, was heading here to view the exhibit. Read went most New Yorkers one better—he formed his negative opinion of Cincinnati *before* his arrival. The Cincinnati controversy "seems incredibly provincial" he said from New York. "There's just unbelievable right-wing conservatism there." Well, we love you too, Mr. Read—and watch out for the cowflop when you get off the plane.

Howard Read's complaints about provincialism speak volumes about the

art world's elitist contempt for its own patrons or potential patrons. Its attitude is that the general public, for which exhibits like the Mapplethorpe show supposedly exist, is obliged to provide tax support for something it is too ignorant to understand and therefore without license to judge. And when the public—the great unwashed, that very tiresome and intrusive collection of pinheads and philistines—responds angrily to that attitude by saying, "You want freedom? Then foot the bill yourself. Until then, we're art critics," spokesmen for the arts establishment fall back on some wordy version of the "no one's forcing you to go see the stuff" argument. If it were that simple, the Howard Reads of the world could dispense with *their* principles and simply ship all art to Hartford and Berkeley, since no one is "forcing" them to endure the provincialism of Cincinnati. It is beyond me how supposedly intelligent artists—a whole "community" of them—can ignore a basic fact of life in this country, one that everybody else accepts as self-evident: spend Americans' money, and they'll stick their nose in your business.

But those opposed to the Mapplethorpe exhibit ignored something too: tell Americans they aren't or shouldn't be free to say, see, read, or listen to something, and they'll make it a matter of principle to prove you wrong. Thus we had in Cincinnati an exhibit of obscene art (put the quotation marks where you will) that was viewed by a record number of people, many of whom had no interest in either art or obscenity, some of whom had reservations about public funding for any art, much less obscene art, and most of whom didn't like the idea of being told what they were and were not allowed to see. It was a fascinating thing to watch, and I still can't decide whether my feeling about those people is admiration that they had the energy to match their convictions, or bewilderment that they took such pains to experience something that held no inherent interest for them, something many of them pronounced "disgusting."

The ironies didn't stop there. In a move that was both admirable (considering the actual content of the exhibit) and bizarre (considering the supposed content of the exhibit), the CAC de-

cided to bar anyone under the age of 18 from even stepping foot inside the center for the duration of the Mapplethorpe show. With this attempt to display sensitivity to community concerns, the CAC validated those concerns by imposing restrictions on the viewing of the art exhibit that were stricter than those placed on the viewing of an X-rated movie—if Cincinnati had X-rated movies. The final irony was that the age restriction was not strictly enforced. I know two sixteen-year-old girls who breezed into the exhibit with no problem at all. The absurd contradictions of age-restricted art reach their peak when one imagines some irate parent marching into the CAC and shouting, “How dare you allow my underage daughter into an art gallery!”

The review passed on to me by one of those gate-crashing sixteen-year-olds was that the pretty pictures were pretty, the weird pictures were weird, and the other pictures—*those* pictures—were “not nice, *really*.” Among adults who saw the exhibit, opinions were far more burdened by qualification and evasion. (“Personally, I found some of the pictures revolting, but it’s not for me to say they shouldn’t be shown” was the most frequently reported comment.) But then, adults sense better than kids the national climate of intellectual terrorism that now surrounds the issue of free expression, a climate in which honorable people with honest questions about the artistic value of sado-masochistic and homoerotic photographs are described in some quarters as “convulsive” and in other quarters as book burners. If you doubt it, I refer you first (and again) to the *New York Times*, and then to playwright Edward Albee, who came to the University of Cincinnati as a guest speaker and graciously told his audience that in the Mapplethorpe affair Cincinnati was attempting a “kind of Orwellian thought control.” “Democracy is terribly fragile,” lectured Mr. Albee. “It must always be on the lookout for the book burners.” (What a fool. To watch close up as Cincinnati thrashed out the issues raised by the Mapplethorpe show was to get a nice little glimpse of how resilient and sturdy and distinctly unfragile a thing democracy is.) He also announced, “Art cannot be obscene. Only attitudes toward art can be

obscene.” If Mr. Albee went on to address the question of whether something obscene can be art, it wasn’t reported.

My favorite appraisal of the Mapplethorpe exhibit came from a woman who, seeking *something* positive to say about the experience for which she’d just paid five dollars, arrived at this: “At least there was no group sex.” I’ll bet you two tickets to a Reds doubleheader that if the depiction of group sex in art is where that woman draws the line, countless arts militants are already deciding they won’t rest until they have “challenged” and “disturbed” her with depictions of group sex in art. After all, nothing less than our “fragile democracy” is at stake. And when she discovers that she has given them a lot more leeway than they have given her, that *any* line is evidence of, say, “Orwellian thought control,” what will she say then?

“At least there was no group sex.” Idiotic pontifications from Edward Albee. It’s that kind of stuff that makes me long for a Royko-like voice in Cincinnati, one that can dish it out a little. But that’s a silly longing. Even without his recent “rube” jab, Mike Royko and the city of Cincinnati wouldn’t last a month together. He

would start making fun of the Reds, and then we’d *really* have an uproar. At that point, the *New York Times* would pick up on the story and report that Royko had once made fun of some beloved Berkeley institution “without incident.” And then . . . well, have you ever seen an entire city break out in mental hives?

Janet Scott Barlow covers popular culture from Cincinnati.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

In This Corner . . .



As I write it is mid-July, and the Senate race between Jesse Helms and Harvet Gantt isn’t nearly as hot as the weather here in North Carolina, where it was 99 degrees in the shade this afternoon. To judge from the phone calls I’ve already had from inquiring Yankee reporters, though, Helms-Gantt is shaping up as the big morality play of the fall. By the time you read this, assuming both can-

LIBERAL ARTS

O EARWIG, O EARWIG

Plants and Animals in the Garden,

We welcome you—we invite you in—we ask your forgiveness and your understanding. Listen as we invoke your names, as we also listen for you:

Little *sparrows*, *quail*, *robins* and *house finches* who have died in our strawberry nets;

Young *Cooper’s Hawk* who flew into our sweet pea trellis and broke your neck;

Numerous *orange-bellied newts* who died by our shears, in our irrigation pipes, by our cars, and by our feet;

Slugs and *snails* whom we have pursued for years, feeding you to the ducks, crushing you, trapping you, picking you off and tossing you over our fences;

Gophers and *moles*, trapped and scorned by us, and also watched with love, admiration and awe for your one-mindedness;

Sowbogs, *spitbugs*, *earwigs*, *flea bee-*

ties, *wooly aphids*, *rose-suckers*, *cutworms*, *millipedes* and other insects whom we have lured and stopped;

Snakes and *moths* who have been caught in our water system and killed by our mowers;

Families of *mice* who have died in irrigation pipes, by electricity in our pump box, and by predators while nesting in our greenhouses;

Manure worms and *earthworms*, severed by spades, and numerous microscopic lifeforms in our compost system who have been burned by sunlight . . .

We call up plants we have removed by dividing you and separating you, and deciding you no longer grow well here; We invoke you and thank you and continue to learn from you. We dedicate this ceremony to you. We will continue to practice with you and for you.

—from a recent Zen Buddhist memorial service for the plants and animals of Green Gulch Farm, San Francisco.

didates have stayed out of jail, our little old state ought to be the focus of right much national attention. That's not surprising: from a major metro point of view our election is great melodrama, as good as anything professional wrestling has to offer:

In this corner, the defending champion, the Darth Vader of American politics, friend of Third World dictators, homophobic foe of artistic freedom, Senator No himself: Jesse Helms of Monroe, North Carolina.

His challenger, from Charlotte, North Carolina, representing the New South and the forces of light: the first black student at Clemson University, the first black mayor of Charlotte, now possibly the first—

Well, who knows? The political hand-cappers around here don't give Gantt much chance, and neither do I, for reasons I'll get to. But it's early yet, and Gantt has already confounded the oddsmakers by handily defeating his opponent in the Democratic primary runoff, a race that was supposed to be much closer. (Remember when David Dinkins and Doug Wilder did less well than the polls had predicted and we heard all sorts of unflattering speculation about why white people who say they'll vote for a black man, don't? Well, apparently lots of people who said they wouldn't vote for Gantt, did. Explain *that*, Daniel Schorr.)

Gantt "has done a great deal, probably more than he himself realizes, to establish respectful communication across sensitive barriers in human relations." He "has demonstrated that he knows a thing or two about human nature, and, more important to our way of thinking, that he is sincere." Those observations were offered by—well, by Jesse Helms, commenting for a Raleigh television station in 1963 on Mr. Gantt's application to Clemson University. Helms was comparing Gantt favorably to James Meredith, calling the two men "a study in contrasts." (I guess you could say they still are: Meredith works for Helms now.) The relentlessly Democratic Raleigh *News and Observer* turned up that morsel, probably intending to embarrass Helms by quoting him as having

said good things about his opponent. The quotations, however, could as easily suggest that Jesse Helms has never been as simple or predictable as his image in some circles suggests.

Anyway, the young Clemson architecture student has grown up to be a candidate much in the mold of Virginia's Douglas Wilder—that is, before Wilder won and his social life picked up. Like candidate Wilder, described by one observer as "the least threatening black man since the Mills Brothers," Gantt is personable and articulate. Like Wilder—and unlike, oh, say Jesse Jackson—Gantt has held public office, elected mayor of North Carolina's largest city by a biracial coalition. (He was defeated for reelection when the fickle electorate voted in Charlotte's first *female* mayor.)

Gantt also resembles Wilder in that he has kept his distance from the Rainbow Coalition. He said once that "We don't need Jesse Jackson's help," by which he probably didn't mean "We need Jesse Jackson's help like a case of ringworm," but that's true enough. When Jackson's old buddy Louis Farrakhan came to Charlotte to preach whatever the Islamic equivalent of a revival is, he invited Mr. Gantt to attend, but the candidate arranged to be out of town. He had to be in California for a meeting of the National Organization for Women, which is probably a slight improvement, electorally speaking.

The conventional wisdom has it that a Democrat can win statewide in North Carolina these days only if he gets 40 percent of the white vote. Terry Sanford got 46 percent, and he sits in the Senate now. Jim Hunt got 38 percent, and he now sits in Raleigh, allegedly practicing law. If Gantt turns out large numbers of blacks who don't ordinarily vote, all bets are off, but otherwise I think Gantt is a nonstarter.

Not because of his race, though. Sure, NPR will find some white voters to say that they won't vote for Gantt because he's black. But it's a mistake to assume that these folks would vote for a *white* Democrat with Gantt's convictions and credentials. Just as any Democrat can count on better than 90 percent of the black vote right now, any Democrat with Gantt's baggage—leave his race aside—is going to have problems with a great many white

voters.

There is, to start with, what a Raleigh reporter once called "the Mecklenberg thing." Mecklenberg County (that is, Charlotte) simply isn't very popular with folks in the rest of the state, largely because Charlotteans do little to disguise their conviction that the rest of us are a bunch of yokels. Running for statewide office from Charlotte is like being from Atlanta and running in Georgia—no, worse: Atlanta has a lot more voters than Charlotte. Having been mayor of the place may hurt Gantt at least as much as it helps him.

Gantt is also going to have trouble disguising the fact that he is what passes around here for a liberal. So far he hasn't even tried. The other day, for example, he volunteered that he's against capital punishment—thereby disagreeing with a solid majority of the voters, black and white, Republican and Democrat. When even Dianne Feinstein has adopted the basketball wisdom that execution is the key to winning, it isn't clear why Harvey Gantt felt obliged to have *any* position on that issue. After all, he won't be able to pardon anybody.

Gantt has assembled a campaign staff with impressive credentials. His pollsters, for example, used to work for Pat Caddell. He has hired a fundraiser and field organizer who used to work for John Glenn, and who has served as "Director of Women for the State of Ohio" (whatever that is). His press secretary is a woman who most recently did the same job for Willie Brown, speaker of the California State Assembly. And his "media consultants" are the New York City firm that worked for Jim Hunt when he lost the Big One to Helms in 1984; one of the two "account executives" (that's what they call them) handling Gantt is Mandy Grunwald, the daughter of *Time* magazine's Harry Grunwald.

Now maybe you're thinking that sounds like a slick, professional operation; obviously someone in Charlotte thinks so. But it's more likely that you see the problem, which is that this is a carpetbag enterprise. It probably won't work—not because Tar Heels dislike outsiders, but because New York account executives usually don't know diddly-squat about the South. Worse, they don't know that they don't know.

Let me show you how that ignorance works.

I play poker with a crowd that includes a couple of conservative Democrats—sort of the Northern Spotted Owls of American political life—and one night a while back these guys got to talking about how to beat Jesse Helms. They agreed that you can't win by trying to portray him the way the Yankee press likes to do it, as evil incarnate. For starters, that concedes that he is an important and powerful figure: the Prince of Darkness may be the kind of stud you want on your side up there in D.C. Besides, too many voters know that picture isn't accurate. They may not agree with Senator Helms, but they know he's a gentleman, and honest. As George Bush says in some television ads, you always know where Jesse stands (which is more than can be said for "Lips" himself these days). *Esse quam videri*, the state motto says: "To be and not to seem." That's Jesse. He's just a little more outspoken than your brother Butch, who thinks pretty much the way he does. You saying Butch is evil?

No, the way to beat Helms, my friends agreed, is to make him a figure of fun. Once that happens to someone, he's through. Ask Jerry Ford. Ask Dan Quayle.

Certainly that's true in the South. Consider Jim Folsom: so long as Alabamians were laughing *with* him, they kept him in office; when they started laughing *at* him, his vote percentage dropped to the single digits. The same thing almost happened to Ross Barnett. Somewhere one of Barnett's advisers offers an engagingly candid account of the time Barnett, in mid-campaign, walked into an airplane propeller. Before the candidate reached the hospital, his staff had hastily concocted a cover story in which the propeller had mysteriously started up and *attacked* him. I mean, people already suspected the man was dumb.

When my friends decided to "Lester Maddox" Jesse, as they put it, they really did a number on him. Most of what they came up with had to do with Jesse getting the big head up there in Washington, and losing touch with his roots. "Textiles going to hell, tobacco going to hell, and he's up yonder having lunch with goddamn Central Americans"—that sort of thing. The

nastiest line, probably too rough for a 30-second concerned-voters-speak television spot but just right for a whispering campaign: "You know, Jesse's been in Washington too long. He keeps talking about homosexuals. Now, you know that ain't right. Something *wrong* with a man that talks about homosexuals all the time." (When he heard that, the Reverend Billy Wirtz—a boogie-woogie piano player I've mentioned in these letters before—instantly dashed off a campaign song, a Glen Campbell parody called "Genitals on His Mind." I won't quote from it in this family magazine, but I have encouraged Billy to apply for Arts Endowment support.)

There is just enough truth in the line my friends were developing that it might sting. The fact is that Jesse does get excited about some foreign-policy and cultural issues that few folks back home care about much. Those issues may go down with his national constituency, and it's not that many people here *disagree* with him; they just don't get as worked up as he does. The homosexual conspiracy is a case in point. Like International Communism, it's a rather theoretical concern in these parts. Sure, we turned out two thousand people in Chapel Hill last June 30 for a statewide Lesbian and Gay Pride March, but, heck, three

thousand people turned out the day before for the opening of Interstate 40 to Wilmington.

Anyway, the senator's admirers don't have to worry. My smart-mouth poker buddies aren't running the Gantt campaign. That's being done by Mandy Grunwald and her friends, who will probably go head-to-head with Helms on no-win issues like capital punishment and Arts Endowment funding. So I conclude, anyway, from what happened when one of my anti-Helms friends, finding himself in Charlotte, presumed on his credentials as a longtime Democratic campaign worker to stop by Gantt headquarters and offer the visiting Yankees some free advice.

He outlined the Lester Maddox strategy to a young woman on the candidate's staff. He even sang a few bars of the Reverend Billy's song. But the young woman was not amused.

"We certainly intend to portray him as weak and ineffectual," she sniffed, "but Jesse Helms is not *laughable*."

My friend realized at that moment that he was wasting his time. He says he should have figured that out earlier, when he walked into Gantt headquarters and was invited not to smoke.

John Shelton Reed is proud to be a North Carolina Republican.

LIBERAL ARTS

LABOUR INTERFERENCE

Citizens of Rochdale, Greater Manchester, are not known for mincing words, and their Labour Party mayor, Vera Lomax, is no exception. As reported in the London *Times*, Mrs. Lomax did not take kindly to gasmen who began noisily digging up the road outside her house at breakfast time. In fact, she brandished a kitchen knife and threatened to castrate one of the workmen, adding ominously that she "liked sweetbreads for breakfast." The worker, one Alan Dempsey, told authorities that she then doused him with a cup of tea and stood by as her dog bit him. She even tried to puncture one of the rubber pipes with a hat pin. "She was hysterical," said Dempsey. "I said 'Just calm down, sweetheart.' She replied: 'Don't call me sweetheart, you disgusting male brat.'"

Mrs. Lomax, who reportedly has had assertiveness training, later explained that she was angry because Mr. Dempsey's pants were unzipped, and that she considered him improperly dressed. "I can be self-righteous and prissy at times," she conceded. She was fined £300 for threatening behavior.

COMMONWEAL



The Myth of the Homeless Family

by Dan McMurry

I had just finished delivering the keynote address at the Hesburgh Public Policy Colloquium on "Housing and Homelessness" at the University of Notre Dame, and the questioning had begun. After a number of questions of the kind that every audience asks—and rightfully so—about my experiences posing as a homeless man, someone asked *the* question. Now *the* question can focus on a number of specific issues about homelessness, but it is always asked in a manner that pits the information I have just given the audience against some part of the homeless activists' propaganda. In this case *the* question was about homeless families.

Barry Zigas, of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, raised his hand, got my attention, and said: "Professor McMurry, in your talk you seemed to characterize almost all the homeless as being disabled by one or more serious personal pathologies—alcoholism, mental illness, ex-prisoners. How do you respond to the news that about 40 percent of the homeless are families and that they are the most

rapidly increasing group?"

I reached into my jacket pocket and retrieved the notes that I had made earlier that afternoon while being given a tour of the Center for the Homeless in downtown South Bend.

I had been very impressed by the way the Center had organized its program. Holy smokes, I thought when I walked into the shelter, they're having a party! The homeless people were wandering around wearing name tags—color-coded at that. Naturally, the first question I asked was about the tags. "Well," said Rayeann, the social worker giving us the tour, "the color indicates what part of the program the person is working in and also what their major problem is. Blue means that the person is actively looking for work, green means they have a mental or emotional problem and are seeing a mental health counselor, and yellow means they are part of a family. Orange tags, which you don't see because they are not allowed in here during the day, indicate that the person has 'just copped out' and doesn't want to sign up for any help. So they can come in for supper, a cot, and breakfast and then have to leave."

Clearly, this easily-installed effort at organization is a great improvement over the laissez-faire approach of most shelters I had visited. Other shelters usually have plenty of resources and an adequate staff, but they allow the clients to just wander around, rarely getting hooked up with what they need. "And, in addition," Rayeann said, "we can tell at a glance who just came in, who's 'visiting,' and who needs what."

One of the questions I always ask at the shelters is about families. As we continued our tour through a room where children were playing and through the spotless kitchen, I asked it: "Where do families stay?" And here Rayeann's answer was like all the others. "Well, here is the family section. The single women sleep here, and the women with children are in these rooms," she said, pointing to a

row of closed doors, "where there is more privacy."

And as usual, I asked, "How about the husband-wife families?" There were no provisions for husbands in the shelter. I asked why not. "Let's see," she said as she paused and looked quizzical for a moment, "we've had only one or two couples since the shelter opened in August." Not families, "couples." In South Bend, Indiana, a city of over one hundred thousand, in a county of almost one-quarter of a million, an hour and a half from Chicago, with any number of services for the homeless, there were no homeless families.

This came as no surprise to me; in fact, I rather expected it. I had been looking for families among the homeless for several years and was unable to find any except for the extremely rare couple usually brought to my attention by the press. But surely homeless families must be everywhere, because the popular media, in their continuous coverage of the homeless, have over and over said—and on TV showed—that homeless families are numerous and increasing rapidly.

During the early 80's, the terms the "new poor" and the "new homeless" were used to indicate to the reader that these "families" made up the bulk of these unfortunate groups. As agencies were formed to absorb the large amount of money becoming available to aid the homeless, the term the "new homeless" soon came to stand for homelessness in general. Thus, the concerned public's notion of who the homeless were was formed by these agencies putting (for obvious reasons) the best face possible on their homeless clients. And the best face possible for them was the rare—or nonexistent—homeless family.

My own search for homeless families as a part of my study had consumed much of my time and energy but had been nearly fruitless. In addition to interviewing shelter operators, agency workers, volunteers, Salvation

Army officers, and many others, I had spent 18 months posing as a homeless man. I wandered across the country, eating, sleeping, and waiting on the streets and in shelters in big cities and small communities. This investigation over a number of years turned up *almost no* "families as couples." Thus it was always a shock to see so much publicity about homeless families and for them to loom so large in our national deliberations. Jonathan Kozol's *Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America* is an excellent case in point.

Kozol's story of women and their children in welfare hotels in New York City focused the spotlight on the multitude of stories and journal articles on "homeless families" being produced at the time. But the reality is that these fragments of relationships are not families, that they do not reflect the sort of kinship arrangements most people think of when they hear or use the word "family." Kozol's title shows how the confusion is created: he found only Rachels—with or without children, and he subtitled them "America's homeless families."

Advocates and shelter operators use the word "family" in a variety of ways. In fact, they use it to indicate almost any arrangement where a homeless person is *with* someone else. Recently I asked a Salvation Army worker how many families were staying in their "Family Shelter." She said, "Oh, there aren't any here. There was a fire Sunday night and we had to place our women in other shelters, hotels, and places." I asked what she had done with the husbands. "We don't allow any men in the shelter," she said.

In the same town, Nashville, Tennessee, there is a "Family Life Center" where men are also barred. And, believe it or not, there is a shelter that is allowed by metro space regulations to house *one and a half families*. Nashville has a population of nearly one-half million and about nine hundred homeless people, typical, I believe, of the homeless population in most big cities. After contacting every shelter that serves families and each agency that I thought would have information about homeless families in Nashville, I was able to count *eight* man-woman couples, who may or may not have been husband and wife.

Dennis Duggan, who is now director of the South Bend Center for the Homeless, served as director of a shelter in San Antonio for three and a half years. His records indicate that on average 22 "families" came to his shelter every day. Of these, he said 19 were single women, nine of whom were teenagers with a baby, leaving three women with "either a boyfriend or a husband." Dennis said that shelter operators engaged in fund-raising use the term "family" very loosely "to perpetuate the myth of the homeless, hard-working, man-wife family and to appeal to the culture of those who have money."

The mission in my hometown of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in its quarterly report for January-March 1990, listed 195 "total nights of shelter." I asked the director, who cooks supper for these people so he should know, how many of these were families. He said, "Oh, about four, I imagine." And these are transient families at that, because the rules of the mission do not allow local families (but do allow local single men) to stay at the mission. Thus, the information I have collected about homeless families, from South Bend to San Antonio and beyond, indicates that a man and a woman calling themselves a family is the rarest arrangement on the streets.

Turning to the work of others, what do we find about homeless families? The data in an excellent new book, Martha Burt and Barbara Cohen's *America's Homeless* (published by the Urban Institute, 1989), are based on the "first nationally representative survey of homeless people and providers in large cities in America." Of all homeless adults in the survey, 79 percent were single men, 10 percent were single women, and 9 percent were women with children. "The remainder," the authors report, "about 2,000 or 1 percent, were men with children." That's it, "the remainder." No man-woman pairs, no couples, no husbands with wives. Not a mention of spouses. In short, no word of families as we generally think of the term. Further, Burt and Cohen use "families" in quotation marks in the early discussion but discard this qualification of the term and use families unadorned throughout the remainder of the book. Their figure of 10 percent of the

homeless being "families," they say, is lower than most of the reported figures. But they claim it is consistent with the 9 percent given by the only other study of homeless persons that included a national but non-random sample, J.D. Wright and E. Weber's *Homelessness and Health* (1987).

The source of the most reliable statistical information about the presence of families among the homeless, however, is very likely Peter Rossi's *Down and Out in America: The Origins of Homelessness*, published last year. The value of Rossi's book derives, in part, from his use of the results of 40 other surveys of homeless people (other, that is, than his own classic and controversial study of the homeless in Chicago). Having the scholarly virtues of objectivity and reliable numbers, the book is well-liked even by conservatives, especially—or perhaps *only*—the first six chapters. Rossi's diagnosis is right on; his therapy, beginning at chapter seven, is way off.

Homeless families are as scarce in Rossi's study as they are in the other reliable ones, which is to say they are missing. He writes, "The homeless have failed in the marriage market about to the same extent as they have failed in the labor market," and that "homelessness is almost identical with spouselessness." And he says this for good reason.

From the Chicago study, he analyzed all those homeless adults who were with relatives and found that only two were with spouses. Ninety-one percent were alone, with a relatively large number of homeless women with children, a very few homeless persons with some other relative, and merely two pairs of husbands and wives.

Of the persons who acknowledged having relatives living in the Chicago area, Ross asked two questions. First: "Assuming that they would want to and have the room, would you be opposed to or in favor of going to live with them?" He then asked his subjects if they believed their Chicago relatives would be opposed to or in favor of their moving in. The results are as significant as they are totally ignored by the homeless advocates. "It is clear," Rossi writes, "that they themselves believe they are not wanted as housemates [and] it is obvious that they would not want to live with their

relatives. . . . Many of the homeless must also be persons with whom it is difficult and perhaps painful to maintain a pleasant relationship. . . . Whatever the process, the outcome is that many of the homeless are completely isolated, and most have only very superficial ties to others."

Fractured lives and ruptured ties — these are the reasons for the "new poor" and "homeless families." These individuals are not families at all; indeed, they are the antithesis of family. Commitment and support are the forces that *prevent* homelessness; they are the "ties that bind." Family values are what in the past provided these defenseless women and children, and children with children, a place to call home. Only in recent decades, as the traditional institutions of family, church, and community have come under increasing assault, have family ties frayed to the point of breaking. Women now are besieged by the same misfortunes men are, and families can or will no longer protect them from these forces.

What are usually called "homeless families" can best be considered 1990 female versions of the bum, wino, and tramp of earlier times. Then he couldn't tolerate the oppressive daily grind. She can't now. He wouldn't stop drinking. She can't quit crack. He found friends who would accept him as he was. She has them now. He had a place to go. She has one now. Then families were expected to nurture and support — at the very least, to tolerate — the wild teen girl, the retarded child, the rebellious daughter. Lately the American family has dissolved, and for the first time its parts are scattered to the streets. The female remnants are much like the male ones, except she has a baby or two and now is called "a family."

In answer to Zigas's question, I told him of my visit to the shelter and Rayeann's statement that there had been only one or two couples there since August of 1989. "It is nearly impossible to find homeless families, that is husband-wife families, to count," I told him. To my extreme right a hand shot up. I recognized a middle-aged former labor organizer, recently ordained as an Episcopal priest. He said, "Yeah, but that's here in South Bend. With all our economic

problems, no homeless families come here. They go somewhere else." The myth of the homeless families, like all myths, dies hard.

Dan McMurry is a professor of sociology at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

LAW



Jeanne Berg

Alone Among Strangers

by Anne Marie Morgan

Abortion and Parental Consent

At the moment the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right of states to enact parental consultation abortion statutes, the abortion-advocacy organizations went into high gear. The *Hodgson v. Minnesota* and *Ohio v. Akron Center for Reproductive Health* decisions "endangered teens," they claimed, and NOW President Molly Yard charged that the Court had "thrown down the gauntlet before the young women and girls of America." However, a rational — rather than emotive — analysis of the relevant issues reveals that the Court's decisions were very sensible ones. Notwithstanding the pained protests, the rulings should have a critical impact on whether young, frightened, pregnant minors will be the recipients of their parents' counsel or the abortionist's zeal, and whether the lucrative abortion-on-demand industry will continue virtually

unrestrained.

Of the 1.5 million abortions performed in the U.S. annually, nearly one-third are on minors, many without parental consent or even *knowledge*. While state laws require parental *permission* for other surgery on minors, abortion has been the sacrosanct exception. Yet there is broad-based public support for parental involvement laws; for example, a 1989 *USA Today* poll reported that 75 percent believe parents should be notified before a female under 18 has an abortion. A nationwide *Los Angeles Times* survey of women who have themselves undergone abortions indicated that fully two-thirds agreed that "Minors should have to get their parents' permission before they can get an abortion."

Nonetheless, this is not the practice in most states. While 37 states have passed parental involvement statutes, until this Supreme Court decision most were temporarily or permanently enjoined. Other legislatures seeking passage became battlegrounds for bitter debates.

Why is there such intense opposition to laws that the public views as simply common sense? Privately, abortion advocates desperately fear that parental consultation laws mark the proverbial foot-in-the-door to overturning abortion-on-demand. Publicly, they offer an array of unsubstantiated objections.

Opponents' arguments can be examined in light of three compelling state interests for requiring parental consultation, as delineated in the High Court's 1976 *Bellotti v. Baird* decision: "The peculiar vulnerability of children; their inability to make critical decisions in an informed, mature manner; and the importance of the parental role in child rearing." In the past decade, substantial documentation has emerged to sustain the Court's position.

Critics contend that parents are extraneous, since minors will have abortions "in consultation with their doctors." This is an exaggeration. Many young girls never see a doctor until they undergo surgery. Most abortions are performed at free-standing abortion clinics, *not* in hospitals, and nearly all states have repealed clinic regulations or licensure. Pre- and post-abortion counseling and emergency equipment

are not required, and any doctor (not solely obstetricians) may perform abortions. Justice Stevens' concurring statement in *Danforth* in 1976 is correct: "The majority of abortions now are performed by strangers in unfamiliar surroundings, where minors are alone, furtive and frightened visitors subjected to assembly line abortion techniques." Dr. Edward Allred, who owns an abortion clinic chain that performs 60,000 abortions annually, described clinic practices for the *San Diego Union* in an October 12, 1988, article:

Very commonly we hear patients say they feel like they're on an assembly line. We tell them they're right. It is an assembly line. . . . We're trying to be as cost-effective as possible and speed is important. . . . [W]e try to use the physician for his technical skill and reduce the one-on-one relationship with the patient. We usually see the patient for the first time on the operating table and then not again.

The absence of clinic regulations to protect women's health and safety encourages slipshod operations, including "abortions" on women who were not pregnant. The lack of emergency equipment has resulted in tragedy. While Debra L. was undergoing her abortion, she swallowed her tongue and attendants were unable to restore her breathing to normal. The clinic's director called Debra's mother to convey that her daughter had had "minor surgery" and was having "respiratory problems." Hospitalized, Debra lay in a coma for two and a half months, then died. Her mother, an amicus in *Hodgson*, grieves that her daughter could have had an abortion without her knowledge.

Opponents of parental notification say abortions are so problem-free that parents are not necessary, but evidence suggests otherwise. Scores of medical journals report that women under 18 who obtain abortions are more susceptible to physical injury, and have some of the most catastrophic complications.

The *Southern Medical Journal* cited adolescent case studies of abortion-related complications, including uterine rupture or perforation, cervical lacerations, hemorrhaging, pelvic pain, endometritis, incomplete operations,

infertility, and repeated miscarriage. A typical pattern emerges with a minor's complications: she will delay health care out of fear of parental discovery of the abortion, and then go to a hospital emergency room. "The teenager, frightened and mentally and physically traumatized by her abortion, will often not seek help until she is almost moribund. Her parents may be the last to know." Ironically, she must have parental consent for treatment.

Dr. James Anderson, a Virginia emergency room physician, shocked even committed abortion advocates at the Virginia General Assembly when he testified of his hospital experiences. Dr. Anderson frequently treats minors who have had abortions (without parental knowledge) for severe post-abortion complications. He also observes the perilous adolescent pattern of delaying treatment. One patient died last year after becoming so infected after an incomplete abortion that antibiotics could not save her. Furthermore, a doctor faces a life-threatening dilemma in diagnosing a problem when a patient *denies* having an abortion due to fear of parental discovery—because proper treatment relies on accurate diagnoses. The physician must guess at the truth. Dr. Anderson testified he is often forced to break the news to parents.

Hodgson amicus Rachel E. manifested this "vulnerability." After undergoing a clinic abortion at 17 on the advice of her high-school counselor, she developed flu-like symptoms. Without post-abortion instructions, she assumed that these were unrelated. Although she finally went to her family doctor, she did not inform him of her abortion. Bacterial endocarditis, a result of a post-abortion infection, caused a blood clot, stroke, and coma. Rachel regained consciousness, but remains a permanently wheelchair-bound hemiplegic.

Clearly, parental involvement alerts parents to potentially dangerous physical and emotional problems of which they otherwise would be unaware. Emotional vulnerabilities can be equally critical. More minors than older women suffer severe anxiety, acute depression, long-term guilt, consternation, and attempted suicide following abortion. The latter is particularly compelling. In *Pediatrics* (1981), Dr.

Carl Tishler alerts physicians to adolescent suicidal tendencies from "anniversary reactions"—on the perceived birth date had the baby come to term. One wonders how many adolescent suicides were young, grief-stricken girls whose parents were unaware that abortion triggered their despondency.

Demographic evidence refutes the charge that parental involvement will cause teens to postpone care and undergo more dangerous late-term abortions. Missouri, whose parental-judicial consent statute was upheld by the High Court, provides excellent data to evaluate the law's effect. For young women under the age of 18, the number of abortions done in 1984 (the last full year before the statute took effect) was 2,564, with 361 done after 13 weeks. In 1987, those numbers were 1,859 and 286 respectively. In other words, the number of second-trimester abortions among Missouri minors dropped by 20 percent after the statute's enactment. The number of Missouri's total minor abortions also declined—by 27 percent.

The claim that births to teens will increase with parental involvement is patently false. Minnesota's parental notice law was in effect for four years before being enjoined. Its data exhibits an unexpected benefit: a drastic reduction in minor pregnancies, abortions, and births. The 1986 Report of the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families entitled *Teen Pregnancy: What Is Being Done? A State By State Look* related that from 1980 to 1983, following enactment of a 1981 parental notification law, births declined 23.4 percent, abortions decreased 40 percent, and pregnancies fell 32 percent among fifteen- to seventeen-year-olds.

The *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* (April 20, 1984) reported:

The surprise finding raises new questions about the effect of a parental notification law that went into effect between those two years. It also raises the possibility of some changes in adolescent sexual patterns. . . . "It would appear that women under age 18 are reducing their risk of pregnancy," [Paul] Gunderson [the Health Depart-

ment's chief of statistics] said.

Danforth noted the historical and necessary legal limitations of minors:

Because he may not foresee the consequence of his decisions, a minor may not make an enforceable bargain. He may not lawfully work or travel where he pleases. . . . Persons below a certain age may not marry without parental consent and they may not vote. . . . But even if it is the most important kind of decision a young person may ever make, that assumption merely enhances the quality of the State's interest in maximizing the probability that the decision be made correctly and with full understanding of the consequences of either alternative.

Opponents say the decision to abort should be left to minors. But a 1989 *Los Angeles Times* poll of women who have undergone abortions indicates that one out of every four women (26 percent) "mostly regrets" her abortion. Such women subsequently experience profound grief.

Adolescents in particular manifest confusion about an abortion decision, changing their minds frequently. Abortion involves a severe double loss for some adolescents: fully 17 percent of minors who have abortions compensate for a first abortion by becoming pregnant again within one year.

Opponents of parental involvement laws wrongly argue that minors already notify parents. One study confirmed that 71 percent informed a best friend, while only 37 percent informed mothers and 26 percent informed fathers. In *Hodgson v. Minnesota* (1988), the Eighth Circuit noted the testimony of a clinic co-director: "Prior to the [parental notification] statute, approximately 25 percent of the pregnant women she counseled told one or both parents of their pregnancy and intended abortion."

In *Pierce v. Society of the Sisters*, the Court upheld the rights, authority, and responsibilities of parents over their minor children: "[T]he child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare

him for additional obligations." Other precedents concur, such as *Prince v. Massachusetts* in 1944: [P]arents . . . who have the primary responsibility for children's well-being are entitled to the support of law designed to aid discharge of that responsibility."

Opponents of parental consultation dismiss the significant issue of family integrity. Yet the parent-child relationship is a *permanent bond*, unlike that between an abortionist and his client, or between two teenage best friends. Research by Dr. Everett Worthington of Virginia Commonwealth University reveals that the anxiety and burden of secrecy in a teenager cause alienation, isolation, guilt, fear, depression, and an increase in family estrangement. In dissenting from invalidation of Minnesota's two-parent notice provision, Justice Anthony Kennedy agreed: "[T]o deny parents this knowledge is to risk, or perpetuate, estrangement or alienation from the child when she is in greatest need of parental guidance and support."

Critics also claim that parents will "beat, abuse, and even kill" their pregnant daughters, but there is no verifying evidence from states with such laws. Instead, there is substantial evidence that most parents support their daughter during an adolescent pregnancy. Worthington also found that after an initial period of disequilibrium, there emerges a more stable period of problem solving in which both mother and daughter take steps to resolve the pregnancy's difficulties.

In addition, a parental consultation statute usually contains a bypass permitting a doctor to proceed with abortion surgery *without* parental notice if the child is in an abusive home (including incest). Indeed, the abuse reporting requirement is an added safeguard for the minor to trigger remedial state intervention she otherwise may *not* have received in chronically abusive situations. As Justice Stevens wrote in 1981 in a concurring opinion for *H.L. v. Matheson*:

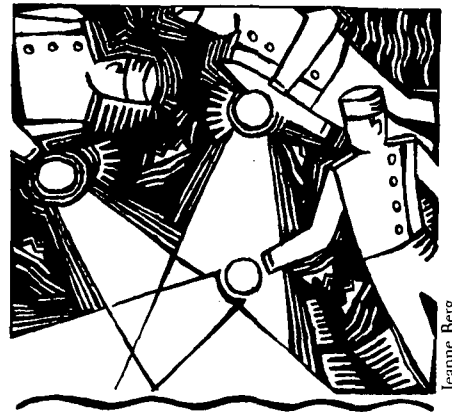
A state legislature may rationally conclude that most parents will be primarily interested in the welfare of their children. . . . [A]n assumption that parental reaction will be hostile, disparaging or violent, no doubt

persuades many children simply to bypass parental counsel which would in fact be loving, supportive and indeed, for some, indispensable.

Abortion tragedies rarely are reported honestly. Media attention instead focuses on the myth of abortion as the hallowed panacea for women. If the state legislatures explore the substantial evidence that has emerged, they will discover that the High Court's original concerns in *Bellotti* were right on target—and pass sensible laws restoring parental protection to pregnant minors in their time of critical need.

Anne Marie Morgan writes from Richmond, Virginia.

FILM



Dick Tracy and the Bad Guys by David R. Slavitt

I wanted to check out *Dick Tracy* mostly because the Disney stock had gone down four points and a fraction on the Monday after its first weekend's disappointing grosses of only \$22.5 million. That news was not encouraging to investors, but I saw it as an indication that perhaps some of those enthusiastic reviews I'd seen might not have been altogether crazy. Even at these stratospheric levels—and we're talking about \$25 million for the film and another \$25 million or so

for advertising and promotion — there is a kind of Gresham's law operating. Quality can creep in to betray the dreams of even the shrewdest and most avaricious studio operators.

Well, I saw the film and liked it — a lot. So much so, that I began to wonder whether my judgment was still reliable. What was I doing, responding with such delight — yes, real delight and admiration — to a piece of such frankly commercial art? Back in the 60's, when I first started writing about films, I recall how I used to get worried in just the same way when I caught myself liking an Annette Funicello beach-blanket movie, for instance. This was at least a way of discovering what Robert Warshow had meant when he'd said, in *The Immediate Experience*, that the hardest thing about being a movie reviewer was to admit that you were there. This rather gnomic pronouncement had made no sense to me at all when I first encountered it, but later, when I came out blinking into the late morning dazzle and caught myself out having enjoyed some dopey piece of celluloid, I got the point. I had been there and had, at some level, responded to whatever changes on the old routines these cine-tasters had whipped up for me. How could I admit this? What standards were left? How could I continue in this pozzo job?

In almost that dilemma, I sat there during *Dick Tracy*, altogether entertained. I'm a lot older now and I worry less about standards, but I am still sometimes suspicious of my own mental status. So, to check myself out, I rented *Batman*, which I am rather relieved to report I found incoherent, dumb, violent, uncertain in its attitude toward its own material, and — with the singular exception of Jack Nicholson's bravura performance — totally skippable.

Nicholson didn't play the movie but did comic turns that were parodies of his own old performances and screen personae. He was worth whatever he got — his participation in the film and the subsidiary rights amounted reputedly to something in excess of \$50 million — because there was no movie without him. Even the old comic books in which Batman first appeared were more intelligently plotted. You can't have your hero and villain in a

belltower (a set-up for Nicholson's line about a "bat in my belfry"), have a huge bell fall to block the entrance to the tower so the police can't come in to help either combatant, and then, out of nowhere, produce a half dozen of the Joker's henchmen for Batman to have to disable or kill. Even the funnies had higher standards of coherence than that.

Michael Keaton is hardly there. He's earnest and boyish out of his Batman costume (and he wears glasses, which I had thought was Clark Kent's schtick), and altogether uninteresting. He is persuasive enough in the Batman outfit, but it is never explained to us why he chose the Bat symbol and paraphernalia, what it means, why he isn't Moleman, or Voleman, or Ratman, or Pangolin-person. The Joker has a logical or anyway plausible history, rather like that of the Phantom of the Opera. But the Batman business is simply a dumb *donée*.

And there's no Robin. The whole idea of these comics is to appeal to a certain group of (for lack of a better word) readers. And those appropriate readers are likely to be males between the ages of seven and fifteen. In other words, late latency and early puberty. The buddy system is a vital reality to this cohort and, so far as I can remember, the only interesting thing about the Batman figure was the "deadly duo" of him and Robin. Take that away, and there's nothing left.

Dick Tracy recognizes this underlying reality and plays itself extremely adroitly to capitalize upon the potenti-

alities for fantasy. The Kid is the identifying figure in whom we invest ourselves, the necessary mediating presence who is all appetite and, appropriately, is almost always shown gorging himself. Tracy, the hero, is torn between his love for adventure (yammering calls on his time and attention keep coming in on the old wrist radio) and his love for Tess Trueheart. What is brilliant about the film's underlying structure is that Warren Beatty's screen persona is exactly right for this shy, troubled Tracy who is fearless with villains but tongue-tied and almost helpless before Tess. It may be that Beatty's off-screen reputation enables him to play the helpless and inarticulate lover on screen (and vice versa, for all I know), but it is what he has been doing ever since *Splendor in the Grass*, and he brings this bag of tricks to Tracy and turns it into pure treasure. There is no villain as terrifying to an eleven-year-old boy as any girl he's stuck on and shy about! And this is just enough humanity to leaven and enliven the comic/cartoon figure and turn him into somebody we can identify with and even care about for a couple of hours.

That extraordinary transaction having been completed, producer-director Beatty can then have himself a good time, making a movie that is, from first to last and frame by frame, simply gorgeous. *Batman* existed in no particular time. There were television monitors to suggest contemporary high-tech, but the cars seemed to be about five years old. All the cars in *Dick*

LIBERAL ARTS

YOU'RE IMMORTAL — ALL THE EXPERTS SAY SO

A Harvard professor told a Senate hearing into the controversy over the National Endowment for the Arts that a basic logic was being overlooked by all sides in the question of whether federal tax dollars should be allowed to support art considered by some to be obscene.

Kathleen Sullivan of the Harvard Law School said previous U.S. Supreme Court decisions had defined "obscenity" as, among other things, lacking "serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." Thus, she said, a project selected by a jury of the peers of the artist, as part of the NEA grants process, would by definition have "serious artistic value."

—from Publishers Weekly,
May 19, 1990

Tracy are period cars—including a delicious lavender Cord that Breathless drives around in. There is a nostalgia for the 30's of Chester Gould's strip and the innocence of its assumptions, so that the grown-ups in the audience are flattered and comforted while the youngsters are being entertained. Such villains as Flattop, Pruneface, and The Rodent are more fun and less troublesome, surely, than Mike Milken. They were rather fun as grotesques, in part because the subtext was that their villainy was a deformation of a more natural condition of virtue and decency. (Milken looks rather like Michael Keaton out of his Batman suit.)

It used to be a rule of thumb that when you noticed how pretty a movie was there was probably something wrong with the plotting, the acting, or the directing. In those self-conscious shots in which the cowboy and his horse would appear upside down, and then, as the camera pulled back, we'd see that we'd been taken, that we'd been shown their reflection on the surface of a pretty lake, and that, above them, correctly oriented, was the real horse with the real cowboy sitting tall in the saddle. We were being diddled. That still holds in Westerns (or would, if they were still making Westerns), but a comicbook movie has different rules. Here in *Dick Tracy* the idea is to conjure not so much the world of the funnies as the nostalgia for them. The real comics were mostly ugly with the colors garish and often off-register. The film takes this dreary truth and uses it as an occasion for a flight of bizarre and mostly breathtaking matte shots and palette effects. The primary

colors are the hues of dreams. This isn't Chester Gould so much as Gould remembered and transformed by a Roy Lichtenstein—or, in this case, cinematographer Vittorio Storaro.

In *Batman*, when Nicholson appeared in a purple suit with a bright orange shirt and a metallic blue tie, we were seeing something arbitrary and mannerist. The next shot might have his shirt and vest off-aqua. The uglier the better, or anyway the wilder the better in a display of cheerful camp nonsense. In *Dick Tracy*, however, the colors are characters. The costumes relate to the sets, and the suggestion is that there is a coherence somewhere, if not that of the world then the more important coherence of dream and fantasy.

The temptation is to compare Nicholson's work with that of Al Pacino (who is Big Boy) and Dustin Hoffman (Mumbles). Nicholson got more attention in *Batman* because there was nothing else to pay attention to. But Pacino and Hoffman are quite wonderful, and what they do is in the service of a work that includes their odd characters and draws its strength from them. I don't think Pacino has ever been better. His menace is menacing—especially when he is rehearsing a line of exhausted chorines in his night club. Hoffman is perfectly brilliant as Mumbles, also self-parodying but in a way that doesn't ever distract from the film's actual business. And even Madonna, who is not exactly on my top-ten list of people I'd cross the street to see or hear, is quite right in this, sexy and, in the end, slightly frightening, as she should be in a late-latency drama.

It's my view that *Dick Tracy* is one of the great movies. That Warren Beatty was able to do so grand a job on a budget as big as this (and therefore with such scrutiny from villains, knaves, and fools) is remarkable. His arrogance and zaniness have been well demonstrated—in *Ishtar* for instance. Those qualities were his allies this time. They kept him from worrying too much about what would sell, what would do well, what would bring in those teeming hordes that would be needed to rack up that thirty-million-dollar opening weekend management had in mind. (*Batman*'s opening weekend brought in \$42.7 million in box

office receipts, just as a comparison figure.) Beatty just made a movie, a perfectly lovely movie, which was more than nifty. It's miraculous.

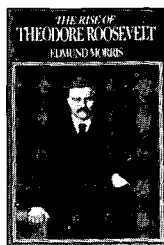
One of those films that underscored the disappointment of Disney executives, opening the same month, was Carolco Pictures' *Total Recall* (it did three million dollars better in its first weekend of play) in which Arnold Schwarzenegger is . . . Arnold Schwarzenegger. This time he is a secret agent from Mars, or maybe not (that's the minimalist plot—I swear). I saw this in a local theater, on opening day, and it was an experience. We're not talking motion picture art here; we're talking raw meat being flung to the beasts. Every time anybody gets kicked in the testicles (which seems to be almost a way of saying hello) or impaled or has his forearms severed, the audience makes a kind of animal noise of delight. The plot is as irrelevant in this kind of picture as in a pornographic film, where the only object is to get from this trio to that quartet. Here, too, there are trios and quartets, and superiors and inferiors, and the gorier the special effects the better the mob seems to respond to it. Schwarzenegger keeps making jokes ("Consider this a divorce," he says to his wife as he shoots her dead with a machine gun), but they are only winks and waves to the animals in the auditorium, acknowledgments that we're having a great time in this *abattoir*, aren't we? The jokes in *Dick Tracy* are good natured and actually very funny. Pacino, particularly, has a kind of moronic delivery patterned perhaps after some of Kevin Kline's routines in *A Fish Called Wanda*. Big Boy is also fond of inventing quotes from great thinkers: "A man without a plan is not a man—Nietzsche." What makes it funny is the earnestness, the stupid effort with which he delivers such fake pearls. Schwarzenegger's jokes are not straightforward but embarrassed, as indeed they ought to be.

That's the environment. That's the ecology. And in such a setting, *Dick Tracy* isn't just another blossom in somebody's garden but an astonishing flower that has managed to bloom in a toxic dump.

David R. Slavitt is a poet and novelist who lives in Philadelphia.

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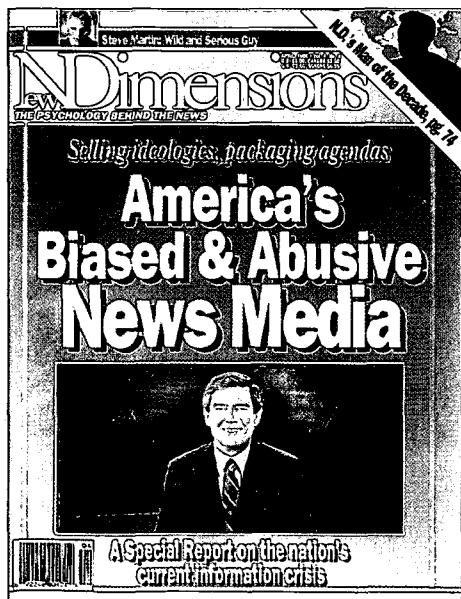
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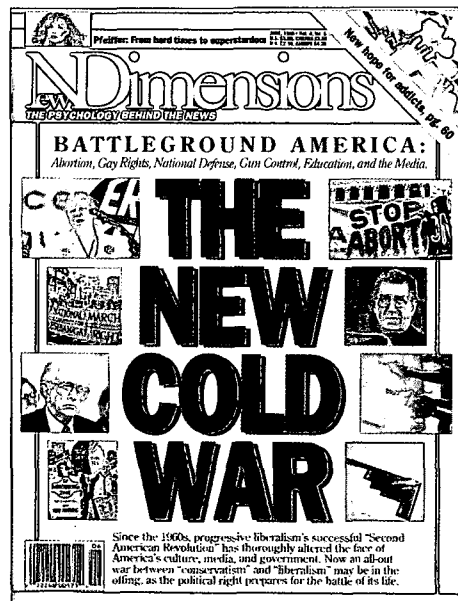
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